

DIFFERENCES

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DIFFERENCES

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Hervey White



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Differences

I.

IT was scarcely a mile, the journey that Genevieve Radcliffe was to take from her own home to Settlement House; but it seemed more momentous to her than crossing the Atlantic. She pretended to make light of it, however, and laughed aloud when her sister Winifred showed signs of tearfulness at parting. How absurd! Had they not talked it all over a hundred times? Besides, was she not to come back always on Sunday?

And yet it was an odd thing to be doing,—going off to live among the poor and the criminals. Why should she do it? she asked. Would it not be better even now to turn back? Then all of the arguments for going on came up. She had recited them so often to objecting family and friends that they were part of her second nature. She was a clergyman's daughter, to begin with; and it was her duty to think of the poor. Of course there was the Ladies' Aid Society. Her mother was always holding up that; but had not the daughter learned at Wellesley that Ladies' Aid Societies are full ten years out of date; that, if you are going to be philanthropic now, you must be more active and scientific? You must study the poor near at hand. You must make them your brothers and sisters. In short, you must have knowledge of their ways, and, above all, must gather statistics. No, her purpose was firm. Now that the members of the family had gone away from the windows, and she was walking against the cool October air, alone in the familiar street, she confessed that she did feel much like running back and weeping with them. It was her pride that kept her up for the first few blocks; and then, as she journeyed westward, something else came to her that turned her grief away from herself and drew her forcibly onward. This

was in the houses she was passing. Ten minutes' walk had served to make the street shabby and common. No more of wide green lawns, no more of well-kept fences. The listless brick houses were built up close to the wooden sidewalks. There was a smell of mustiness mingled with coal dust in the air. "Why should these things be so?" asked Genevieve curiously, and seemed drawn onward now to try at solving the question. Then from brick houses and shabby streets she came to a neighbourhood of wooden houses and streets that were positively filthy. "Why do the painters use only one kind of paint," she wondered, "and that such a dirty, gray colour? Is it cheaper, this ugliness, or do they draw their ideas of beauty from the light of the heaven, and try to copy that? If so, they have succeeded well. The streets now are even a shade dirtier than the heavens."

She walked on steadily. Babies were playing in the streets. It was the recess hour of the schools, and great crowds of children were bulging out of the dusty little school yards. They looked at her curiously. She was very plainly dressed, in a colour something like that of the houses. Still, it was a clearer, cleaner hue; and by her dress and her every manner they knew she was a stranger to them and to all their ways. She was what they termed a lady. She looked at them half frightened that they might insult her, but determined to smile her bravery. Some of the girls smiled back. There were dark shadows under their eyes, drawn diagonally downward across their cheeks. A strained look was noticeable in many of their faces. Some were fat and hearty-looking, but the general impression was one of poverty or ill-health. Their hair was dry and wispy, showing none of the gloss of life. Such cheap finery as they wore

seemed to make the poverty of their dress still more apparent.

Genevieve thought of the elegant, dainty children she was used to seeing, with sweet and childlike faces and gentle, modest manners. These children whom she now saw seemed especially ugly about the mouths. There was no expression to their lips, no control of the muscles. There was only a straight stretch of flesh that had been drawn out of shape by the chewing of gum and the talking of coarse talk in a coarse fashion. And yet these children and those she had known lived less than a mile apart.

The streets became poorer and poorer. She was nearing the river now. She recognized its proximity by the heaviness of the atmosphere. The houses were dirtier than before, their stairways and landings more dilapidated and maudlin. An awful stench arose from the piles of garbage in the gutters. Often there were no boxes for refuse; and sometimes, when there were, they had long since been filled, and heaps were now half covering them with fresh foulness. Genevieve lifted her skirts, and looked at her neat little boots.

A drunken man came tottering down the walk, swaying from one side to the other, doing his very best to keep in a line and avoid showing his condition to the lady. Genevieve did not know his kind thoughts. It seemed much more likely to her that he would call upon her to halt and give up her purse and her jewelry. What foolishness for her to be wearing her watch, the one Uncle George had given her on the announcement of her engagement to Maynard! Still, it was no time for deploring now. With set teeth and steady downcast eyes she marched on without flinching; and the drunken man, as drunken men always do, seemed to be bearing down upon her till he

was within four feet of the encounter, then veered unsteadily off and gave her the full width of the sidewalk.

Settlement House now loomed up before her, and she began to breathe freely again. At the end of the little street it rose, not commanding the street, but on one side looking across to some miserable boxes dignified by the name of cottages. It was a square, brick, institutional-looking building, three stories in height, with ugly, bare windows. It had been originally intended for a mission school building, and as such had served fifteen years or so. Times had changed, however, as they do change in Chicago more frequently than anywhere else. Mission schools were no longer in vogue. Settlements had taken their places. So the ugly, institutional, brick building, no longer a sewing school, was now known as Settlement House.

Genevieve rang the bell, and turned to grow familiar with the prospect as she waited. Across were the dreary cottages already mentioned. At the closed end of the street was a high board fence painted the universal colour, an imitation of mud and coal dust. This was the fence of the gas-works. Three of the reservoir tanks rose up beyond it, like huge cheese-boxes, each covering an acre. Genevieve was so thankful that they were painted a rich brown instead of gray. The smoke rose up from their chimney-stacks, and aggravated the general cloud. There must have been a great deal of gas escaping, too, from the waste; for the air was tingling with the odour.

The door opened, and a lean little girl with staring eyes was saying that Mrs. Purcell was in, and asking would the lady walk into the parlour. Genevieve stepped through the institutional hallway into a very cosily furnished reception-room, where a row of poor, bedraggled-

looking women were sitting in chairs along the wall. The chairs had not originally been in rows ; but the women, as they sat down, had instinctively arranged them so. A very pretty girl—a lady the waiting women called her—with a fresh young face was talking with the woman at the farther end of the line. Her cheeks were pink with interest. Her clear brown eyes were shining with sympathy. Her placid hair, her pretty features and dress, made a real joy and goodness to look at. Genevieve counted the women in the row, and found to her surprise that there were only four. Just then Mrs. Purcell came in.

The head of Settlement household was a plump, smiling little woman,—all young girls loved her the first minute,—with something of bigness and of strength in her face that may not be more unusual in small people than it is in large, but invariably occasions greater surprise when found there, and, unfortunately, is rare enough in large and small to create an unusual feeling. We are all of us more than ordinarily magnanimous with people of very short stature ; and, although, perhaps, Mrs. Purcell could not be classed with the shortest, the effect was always kept up by the very short and stiff-corseted waist encased in crinkling, well-fitted black silk, the slenderest place of which, and that quite plump and round, was scarcely four inches below the arm-pits. The arms, too, exaggerated the effect ; for they were of unusual length. And, being encased like the waist in the wrinkling newness of black silk which came well down over the mobile fingers, they constantly tempted comparison between the short and long.

The crinkling silk of the waist descended into a bunchy skirt. A harsh woman with a fastidious eye might complain that this skirt was dowdy. It was a little shorter

than common; and the feet appearing from its hem were large, like the hands, and moved too quickly and in too short steps for anything like grace and ease.

But, after all, it was the face that attracted. From the high, choking collar of the crackling silk rose a head of most stately proportions. It had the squareness of masculine strength, and at the same time the roundness of feminine beauty. The hair was parted neatly and brushed back in golden brown smoothness. There was not even a suggestion of gray, though Mrs. Purcell was not longer in the middle age, and wore a lace cap. Why she wore this lace cap nobody knew. "A mark of my servitude," she was wont to say smilingly. At all events, it was not unbecoming; and it had a lavender bow of silk ribbon that was a very pleasing bit of colour after the sheen of black silk and the snow-white of the lace.

Mrs. Purcell wore glasses always,—spectacles of the old-fashioned kind that hooked their slender hoops over her ears. In some way the clearness of the glasses seemed to add to the clearness of her eyes, which were blue and steady, with a mildness that was very well suited to the other features, and especially the large and firm sweet mouth.

"I am glad to see you, my dear," said Mrs. Purcell, in a voice low and melodious. "You must come at once to your room. Your trunks have already gone up. It is very good to welcome you into our household. We are a happy little family, and I can see from the beginning that you belong."

Genevieve's fingers were held in the strong, straight ones that extended from the black silken sleeves, and she was led up the institutional stairs to a little box-room on the third floor. Before she was half-way, however, she felt down deep in her heart that here, at this time, she

was more at home with this woman than ever she had been in her own home with all of the years with her mother.

II.

IT was at the dinner table in the early evening that Genevieve first began to understand what the household really was. The lunch hour had been interrupted and more or less desolate, some of the people not coming at all, others dropping in for a minute or being called out before they had fairly begun. It had only served to give the new arrival an impression that they were all very busy with a hundred important things to do, that she was necessarily idle and useless, and would probably always remain so. Mrs. Purcell had not come down at all. Genevieve was hardly introduced or noticed by the others. She could only hurry back to her room, and wonder in a vague way how it was that everything was going on so well without her or without affording any possible opening for her service.

At dinner they were still busy talking of what they had been doing; but Mrs. Purcell was there to make the formal presentations, and something about her quiet face gave calm and stability to the entire company. The places at table, too, had changed somewhat. There were fewer people now, as the kindergarten and other day teachers did not sleep or dine in the house. There were only eight altogether,—two men, the hostess and two elderly ladies, who acted in the capacity of nurse and housekeeper, two girls, one of them, Miss Crawford, the pretty one that Genevieve had seen in the morning, and, finally, the timorous stranger herself.

She was not so timorous now, however; for she sat next to the little lady in the lace cap and rustling silk, and watched the long, mobile fingers serving in homely and sympathetic fashion.

The young man on Genevieve's right was not without

kindly attentions as well, though often he was entirely absorbed in the question of model tenements for the poor, and speaking to the pretty girl on his right or to the company in general about the possibility of interesting capital in a favourite model that he was explaining. Genevieve could see that he had a square, stubborn head, and that he was fair, clean-shaven, and comely. He suggested the student more than anything else, the hard-working, philosophical student. There was a gleam of fire in his eyes that she liked. His name, she learned, was Westfall. The name of the other man was Mr. Brown.

But it was a face directly opposite that attracted her more than the rest. It had a certain metallic attractiveness that was fascinating and yet somewhat disturbing. Hester Carr impressed one from the start as being an artist. If she did not paint, she must be a musician or an actress or writer. No one could be so unusual-looking and be only with ordinary people. It turned out that she was a violinist. Mrs. Purcell found time in the course of the dinner to inform Genevieve that Miss Carr had unusual talent, and that her great desire was to go abroad, although her interests here were strong at present. The graceful form was certainly adapted to the grace of her instrument. There was a commanding strength in the chin, a well-trained muscular neck that was athletic and still feminine and beautiful. In stature Hester Carr was something above the average; and yet she always gave the impression of a smaller person, she was so restless, quick-moving, and changeful. Her hair was short and fair. Combed from the crown in the direction of its natural growth, it was peculiarly fine and separate; and, though short of being a shock, it gave the impression always of a violent wind blowing on her from

behind. Seen from the back, it was smooth, blond, and had a boyish effect. Seen in front, the hue was entirely changed. One could think of nothing to compare it to save the lines of a white-cap at sea, when the long and thread-like foam is torn from the crest of the wave by a stiff breeze.

The face within this strange frame was regular enough for beauty, but not too regular to deprive it of individuality: a low forehead, with eyebrows close to the eyes; a large nose on the order of the Greek, yet never allowing one to forget that she was an American; a clean-cut, delicate profile; thin lips, with the power of control. There was something about all of the features that, in spite of the delicate lines and the girlish softness of flesh, suggested the coldness and texture of fine steel. If the dreamy softness of the violet eyes should be concealed by a black velvet mask,—why, only to imagine it was horrible. It was going back into the Middle Ages at once. The white hands seemed shaped for a dagger. The stealthiness of the arms and the supple body were fitted for the bearing of a poison cup. This elusive quality usually made women cold and distrustful. With men it was different. At first glance they agreed with the women, and called the girl queer; but they looked again, and the spell of the blue eyes was upon them.

She dressed differently from other women, too. There was no stiffly corseted waist, no lace frilling the edge of a board, no ribbons with staring colors and sharp cutting edges, none of the ugliness of a gored skirt to outrage the nature of textile fabric,—just a simple frock such as a child sometimes wears. To-night it was of rich red merino, with the purple tinge in its folds that suggests the velvet of pansies. It was cut low enough to allow freedom to the throat, and edged with a collar of soft lace.

The sleeves were full at the shoulders and gathered in half-way below the elbow with more lace, permitting full freedom to the arms. The gown was girted in by a girdle of gold braid that was high enough to act as support and allow the full play of the body. It was the quaint, ever-beautiful costume of the time of the Empire, except in this case there was a second confining girdle at the hips, in the modest Florentine fashion; but this was of woven silk and of the same glowing hue as the merino.

"It is my party gown, and you must excuse it; for usually we do not dress for dinner here," she said kindly, laughing at Genevieve, who blushed at being caught in inspection. "I am to play to-night at the neighbourhood party. Don't you think it is a pretty gown to play in? I am proud of making all of it myself, and without any one's pattern or, better, without wasting the dear cloth."

As she spoke, she smoothed the folds of her sleeves, as if she had a real affection for the fabric. It was a sensuous, half-offending gesture. Genevieve was not sure that she was pleased with this display of feeling. If Miss Carr had clasped her hands, set her features, and said, "Isn't it perfectly lovely?" she would not have been disturbed; but for her lithe, curving arm to reach out and caress the cloth as if it were almost a lover,—to say simply and naturally, and without the customary exaggeration, "Don't you think it is a pretty gown?"—Genevieve felt the charm of the action and the remark, though it gave her also a sense of uneasiness. However, she was kind-hearted before she was conventional; and she replied with a sympathetic smile:—

"It *is* a pretty gown. I only wish I could say that I made my own, even if they were as stiff as the one I have on."

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"Oh, I never should have learned it myself if I had grown up in the city; but in Colorado one must learn to be independent."

"But Denver is much like Chicago, I suppose?" suggested Genevieve, with growing interest.

"I come from Trinidad: that is way to the south. An ugly name. In English it sounds so naked and insecty. But in Spanish it is all very well: it has the swing of music in it then. Besides, you know, it means the Trinity."

"Is it a pretty place?" asked Genevieve.

"In its own sublime fashion it is,—yes," said the girl, her eyes growing dreamy with remembrance. "The hills behind lead the paths right up into the blue of the heavens. There is a monument up there, a tombstone. When you climb, you can see the Spanish peaks; and that is happiness for the humblest."

She did not speak for some time, and Genevieve was turning again to Mr. Westfall.

"Were you here at lunch?" asked Miss Carr, with sudden interest. "Don't! don't!" she continued, laughing, when Genevieve had admitted that she was: "at least, don't until you have been here a week and had your hands filled with things to do. What do you think of it, anyway?"

"I feel as if I should never be of any use to anybody," confessed Genevieve, startled into frankness by the suddenness of the question.

"Oh, you'll have plenty to do in a week. You are going to help in the charities, aren't you?"

"I am going to try," was the modest answer.

"Miss Crawford will initiate you in the morning. Then you will go calling. You know we have all of the modern improvements of charity. We make personal

acquaintance with the patient, and we scorn the cold calls of investigation."

There was a ring of scepticism in her voice that Mrs. Purcell hastened to challenge.

"It is the right way, the only way; and you yourself, Hester, must admit it, and admit that you act upon it."

"Oh, I do not act," said the girl, with a toss of her head, though her voice had a certain delicate deference that was lacking in addressing others than Mrs. Purcell. "I do not pretend to charity. I play the violin, and say, 'Take this sweetness, and put into your stomachs: this is the greatest creation of genius.' And then I explain to them all the things that I know they are not capable of understanding, because their stomachs are not satisfied with my contributions."

"All that you may do or may not do does not damn our methods of dealing with the poor."

"But the method is damned, for all that. I mean, of course, it is a damned method," she said, revelling in the deliciousness of swearing and carelessly omitting to notice that one of her hearers, at least, was disconcerted at her freedom. Even Mrs. Purcell was silent.

"It is treating the poor as a class and employing any method of handling them that I object to," the girl continued impatiently, her soft eyes hardening to a steel-colour as she spoke. "Why can't they be treated as individuals, the same as other people? What would the rich think of my impertinence if I went about the world treating them in a peculiar manner,—as if they were not real people at all, but only 'the rich,' in my knowledge?"

"But who says that we have a peculiar method of treating the poor? I said that we made friends with them. You are not fair in your argument."

"But why make friends with them, if they are not

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suited to friendship? Friendship is too sacred a thing to be dragged in the mud of the streets. Could I expect to go unrebuked if I should undertake to make friends with the rich in the same way?"

"You put your case well, Hester," said Mrs. Purcell, sadly. "But I think the treatment you subject me to is rather rough sometimes." There was a half-humorous smile playing about her lips.

"You know my cow-ranch manner," said the girl, carelessly. "I am as sorry for it as any one."

Miss Crawford had been listening to the conversation during the last few words; and, though she said nothing, her flushed face spoke plainly her sympathy for Mrs. Purcell and her indignation against the tormentor.

Genevieve liked Miss Crawford for this, and was glad that she was to work with her, and not with Miss Carr. To show that she was in no way interested in this undignified expression of opinion, she turned to Mr. Westfall, and tried to interest herself in his tenements. She liked Mr. Westfall, partly for himself,—for he was strong and manly,—but chiefly, perhaps, because he was not nearly so handsome as Maynard Neville. Genevieve smiled at this little effort at self-analysis, and pictured herself telling Maynard about it on Sunday.

The dinner moved on, and ended without any lingering over the coffee. "There is a class to meet in the dining-room," explained Mrs. Purcell, by way of apology to the new-comer. Upstairs they found the children clamouring at the door.

"It is time for the penny bank to be open," said Miss Crawford, cheerily, as though it were a time for rejoicing. "Will you come, Miss Radcliffe, and see the savings-bank? We have it every evening for the children."

They passed into the large school-room, where the

children were being marshalled by a policeman. Miss Crawford seated herself at a table, and smilingly began counting out little stamps, which she gave in exchange for the pennies of the children, who crowded about her and pasted their stamps in their books. She did not seem to notice that they were dirty or that they smelled of disagreeable surroundings. She smiled upon all alike, and patiently answered their questions about the games. After the banking business was over, some of the children gathered around her,—though most of them were busy with their checkers,—and she talked to them and told them short stories, and was charming and good to them all.

Miss Carr, who seemed to be moping restlessly about the house, came in once for a minute. She paid no attention to the children, but seemed to be looking for some one who was not there, until a little girl advanced timidly from a corner.

“Why, Margot,” she said, suddenly becoming conscious of her surroundings, “where have you been hiding yourself?”

She took the bedraggled little waif up in her arms, pressed her close against the rich party gown, and clasped her white arms about her impulsively.

“Goodness, what a dirty face!” she said, after kissing her. “You actually taste of it. I bet you have not washed since morning.”

She started out with the child still close in her arms, stopping only for a chat with the policeman. Genevieve noticed that the burly officer spoke to her as if she were one of his own class,—familiarly and without embarrassment. He even caught her sleeve in his hand, and held her as he was speaking; nor did she in any way flinch or seem to think that he was taking undue liberty. Gene-

vieve was not sure, but she thought he was admiring her beads. She did not like the easy terms on which the two seemed to meet, and yet she had been impressed by the episode with the child.

After her conversation with the policeman, Hester walked leisurely out of the room with the peculiar springing step of one who had no heels to her shoes. She carried the child still in her arms.

When the hour was done, the children were dismissed and the policeman returned to his beat.

"Come into the parlour," said Miss Crawford. "It is time for the people to be coming to the neighbourhood party."

Genevieve followed excitedly, as if she were entering a grand ball-room. She even felt at first the same retiring confusion. "It will be so much to tell Maynard Sunday," she thought, with a smile at her foolishness. "I wonder how I shall ever get through with it all."

III.

A NEIGHBOURHOOD party in a social settlement is a curious bit in the great study of society. It is unnatural, of course, though perhaps not more unnatural than many society functions, where a great crowd of people is called together without any particular reason for the calling except that some rich lady has a rich house, is expected to let all of her rich friends enjoy it, and honestly does the best she can. A social settlement party is not so different except in the degree of the richness. Here the kind people who live in this large house wish to share its comforts with their neighbours. The desire may be purely a social one. There need not be any of the sympathy, born of false reasoning, to the effect that the poor creatures live cramped up in small houses and must therefore be as uncomfortable in them as we should be, and very grateful to us for an hour of space that is warm and light, with room to get about without stepping on dogs or cats or children. As a matter of fact, these poor people are often glad to get back to their homes and put on their own homely ways. They may even like the confining walls. It is their idea of cosiness. They may not know there are smells, or, recognizing them, they may rejoice that they do not live in a place like a public hall, with none of the odours of domesticity.

Mrs. Purcell was not ignorant of all this ; and, although she did invite people who she thought most needed hospitality, at the same time she did it chiefly because she enjoyed their company, and had at her heart a yearning for humanity in the aggregate. Her rich face glowed with kindly welcome as she stood shaking hands in the hallway. She did not wait for people to remove their

wraps and come alone into the parlour. It was both their way and hers to welcome a guest at the door. It did not seem fitting to let them stay in the house for a time entirely at the mercy of strangers.

"Just put your things in the cloak-room," she would say again and again, "then hurry up, and come in to the fire. The grate is very welcome these chilly nights."

Some scrub-woman, perhaps, would think it might not be proper to take off her hat and gloves, and would say, by way of apology, that she was only going to stay a short time.

"You shall do nothing of the sort, and I insist upon your taking off your things," Mrs. Purcell would reply. "Miss Carr is going to give us some music, and we are to have games and refreshments. I shall not allow any person to leave the house before ten o'clock without a most excellent excuse."

There was ease in all this, and cordial naturalness. Who shall say that a settlement party is so impossible a place for enjoyment? But even here there was stiffness and mistrust in the beginning. The people insisted in sitting in rows around the wall, the women boldly pretending an ease that comes from moving in society, the men shrinking back in dark corners and pretending nothing at all. Indeed, how could such a company be entirely congenial? They were not here in their own set. The acquaintance of a settlement is so varied; and, as a matter of principle, all the pet social distinctions of the neighbourhood are ignored. It is intended that here shall be a democratic freedom from social distinction. What wonder if the freedom is sometimes a little forced into the bondage of the freedom idea?

But a vast amount can be accomplished by the hostess; and Mrs. Purcell would always find a moment of interval

from her duties at the door to step into the awkward pauses, and by suggesting a topic of conversation, or by making some needed introduction, guide the current of common enjoyment into easy, natural channels that would seem to have been inevitable from the beginning, but which without the skilful suggestion would have become vast, shallow swamps of stagnant, insipid gossip. Her helpers, too, all felt the responsibility of hosts. Mr. Westfall and Mr. Brown sought out, without seeming to do so, the retiring men in the corners. Miss Crawford was moving among the women, smiling alike to them all, and leaving in her wake sly looks of their common admiration and often the whispered words of "a lovely, lovely lady."

Genevieve was shy on this her first evening in these strange surroundings. When introduced to some woman, the like of whom she had never met before except in her mother's kitchen, she found it very difficult to find common topics for conversation. The late novels or the opera would not do, and she was afraid of personal questions. She was going to tell them of her uncle's country home; but it seemed cruel to speak to them of the things they could never know or at best could have thought of only as places in which to slave as servants. Finally, she thought of Niagara Falls. There was no exclusiveness in its grandeur. Rich and poor alike could look upon it, and they were interested to know she had been in a place they had read of at school and studied in geography lessons.

Miss Carr came in a little late, when the guests had all arrived. She carried her violin under her arm, her bow already in her hand. Unlike Miss Crawford, she made no formal greeting to any one; but there was here and there a glance of the eye or a tap on the head with the dainty bow.

"I am always fond of people who are going to hear me play," she said to Genevieve and the little group to whom she had been talking. "Now, if I met these people on the street to-morrow, I should probably not speak to them or think of it. Would I now, Mike?" she said, turning to a heavy fellow, who was evidently a ditcher.

"You'd just pass us grandly by, as if you were a real, dressed-up lady," said Mike, chuckling fondly at his humour.

"As if!" said Miss Carr, playfully. "Why, Mike, I *am* a real lady. Haven't I told you about it again and again?"

"And her father driving teams in the mountains," said Mike, winking violently to the others.

"It was a four-horse team," said Miss Carr, proudly; "and that makes all the difference in the world."

"Mules," corrected Mike, winking again in his lively fashion.

"A four-horse mule-team, of course. We do not have horses in the mountains. I suppose here in Chicago you say 'a four-mule team,' or may be 'a four-mule-horse team,' as you might when thinking of your horses, slaving as they do at the street-cars, for instance."

"They have taken the horses off from all the lines in the city. I read about it in yesterday's paper."

"They use them down town, though," corrected a man, "where the trolley charters do not extend into the crowded parts."

They fell to discussing just which lines used horses and which did not. A thin-looking factory woman came over, and put her arm around Miss Carr's waist.

"I want you to come over and be introduced to Jennie Williams," she said fondly. "She's been crazy to know

you for six months; and now she's got Sadie Gardner to stay with her mother, just so she could come over and hear you play."

"Remember, Mike, that I proved myself to be a lady," said Miss Carr, as she moved away arm in arm with the factory woman.

"Not to be spoke to on the street," assented Mike, as if it were all a huge joke. "Hester's a great girl," he added, admiringly, to the others. "And that sharp she is. Sharp as tacks." Here he seemed to become aware of Genevieve's presence, and shrank timidly into the background.

The action pained her, and made her wish she were with Maynard. She had not thought of him before since coming into the room. Mrs. Purcell came along at this juncture.

"I want you all to go into the school-room," she said. "Miss Carr is going to play, and then we will talk again later. How is your husband to-night, Mrs. Svendsen?" she asked of a tall Swedish woman.

"He do very poorly, Mrs. Purcell," said the woman, plaintively. "All de time he experience such a pain in his legs." And, as they moved on in the crowd, Genevieve could hear bits of a detailed description of just where and how the man felt and all that the doctor had said about it.

The people were settling into the folding-chairs that had been arranged for an audience after the bank children had gone. Hester Carr was standing on the little platform by the piano, where Miss Crawford was already seated. Gradually the hum of conversation grew fainter till it died to a whisper. There was silence when Miss Carr began talking.

Genevieve could not but admit, as she looked at her,

Differences

that she was very beautiful. There was a freedom and grace in her poise that come only from the unconsciousness of inspiration. She stood with one foot advanced, the glowing colour of her gown falling in rich folds about her. The violin was still under her arm. The bow in the right hand was resting on the dainty advanced foot. Her head was slightly lifted, like a poppy poised on its stem, a faint, sweet smile was on the level lips, a dreamy vision light was flowing from her level eyes. It was breathlessly quiet when she began speaking in low, even tones.

"One of the beautiful things first," she was saying as if it were inevitable. "You may not like it so well as the songs I shall play to you later, but I have learned to love these things so with practice that I should not feel that I was speaking truth to you to-night if I did not play them to you. I am not going to tell you who was the composer. He was a German, and felt life much as we do. But do not try to get at the meaning of the music. Just settle back and let it sound to you, nor need you try to keep your attention upon it. I want you to let your thoughts go where they will."

She raised the bow gently from its place while Miss Crawford was playing the introductory chords. The violin lay lightly on her neck, her white arm rose to the horizontal, just curved enough to give freedom to the bow. For a moment only she stood, there was almost a prayer in her posture, then the low wailing music began.

"There is something that is frail in a woman," she said sadly when she had ended, "something that keeps us always a little way from genius; and that is that we are not complete in ourselves; we need inspiration from others. Now the lament I have just played to you I have done infinitely better standing as I do before you, know-

ing that I had your attention. Now a man,—a man would have played it better alone, when he had but the solitude of his thoughts. That would have come from himself: this comes of my wish to be appreciated by you. I fear it is so with all women.”

She turned to Miss Crawford again, and nodded a signal for beginning the next number. It was a brilliant *polonaise*, and in the difficult parts she was reckless and hazardous in her abandon. A critic would have said she lacked training, but her audience was warmed into a burst of applause. She laughed as she looked them in the eyes, and, when order was restored, began again the fantastic intricate composition. There was another strain of brilliancy at the close, the wind of which seemed blowing her hair. Again came the applause of her audience, and she bowed to them gayly in acknowledgment.

An old sweet strain of Italian love music followed, the pleasure of which lies in the heavenly singing of the music, and not in the things that are suggested.

“And now,” said the musician at the end, “you shall have the old songs that you love and that I love, too, because they are the tunes that my father played and the songs that were sung by my mother.”

She began playing simply and naturally to them then, Miss Crawford having left the piano. Sometimes she talked a bit, gave a homely reminiscence of the first time she remembered having heard that song or a laughable description of how some man used to play it. At times a man in the audience would call for a favourite; and always it came, to his gratification. Miss Carr was not above playing the miserable songs of the cheap theatres, and playing them well and with feeling.

“Of course, they are very bad,” she would say with a laugh; “but I enjoy them with you, in a way.”

The music ended, the audience broke up, noisily folded the chairs, stacked them away, and began the discussion of the games. Mr. Brown came into active service here, and soon the fun was well under way. The neighbourhood parties were regular affairs at Settlement House on Saturday nights, and the people knew how to enjoy them. There was blind-man's-buff, of course. There was dumb crambo, and great fun at costuming. Later on they were quiet again, and Mrs. Purcell served tea. At half-past ten they were gone, after many good-nights at the door.

"There is one thing I cannot understand, Miss Carr," said Mr. Brown, as they were all washing the tea things in the pantry downstairs; "and that is how you can bring yourself down to such songs as *The Sunshine of Paradise Alley* and *Sweet Marie*, after the music you played there to-night."

Miss Carr was encased in an enormous brown holland apron that buttoned up close to her chin and covered her arms with its stiff sleeves, and she waved the tea-cloth merrily.

"If you will forgive the presumption, Mr. Brown, I will tell you that it is the difference between the artist and the critic. An artist, now, may love a bad thing—something that is even cheap and vulgar, perhaps—if it is the genuine product of the people. But with the critic it is different. He always wants the perfection of motive and execution that he has learned to think are essential. But, as to genuineness, sometimes he recognizes it and sometimes he doesn't. Now I see you are ready for an argument."

The argument began, and continued through the washing of the tea things. All joined in. All talked at once.

Miss Crawford went with Genevieve to the door of her little room.

"Miss Carr plays with a great deal of talent, don't you think so?" she asked.

"It was certainly very wonderful," said Genevieve. "I should think she would be better known."

"Well, she is young, and has not had the best of training. Mrs. Purcell is going to introduce her to one or two evenings this year, and give her a start. She is poor and proud, I suppose, and knows that she lacks the best instruction. You are going back home for to-morrow, aren't you?"

Genevieve explained that she had come purposely to stay this first Sunday to talk with Mrs. Purcell about her work, but that usually she should go home.

They said good-night several times again.

"A wonderful girl!" said Genèvieve, still thinking of what she should tell Maynard about Miss Carr; "and yet I am almost afraid of her."

IV.

IF Genevieve was expecting the peace and quiet talks which a Sunday at her own home had always meant to her, she was soon to learn her error. At three o'clock in the morning she was awakened by the loud threats of men and the shrill warnings and pleading of women's voices in the alley under her window. She was a bit dazed at first. Then, realizing where she was, she hurried to the window, thinking that the house was on fire or that they were being attacked by a gang of robbers. On listening carefully for a time, she realized that it was only a private quarrel. Her room was on the third floor, and she was very thankful for that; but she could not help hearing every word that was spoken.

"You are a liar," shouted a man's thick, maudlin voice. Then followed a volley of oaths and foulness, the meaning of which the girl did not half understand, but which she shuddered from in horror as if it had been a draught from hell. "Come out of your house, you sneak, and I will take your blood to wash in."

There was a pause then. Evidently, the sheltered man was debating. Genevieve could hear a woman's voice within, soothing and pleading with her husband.

"Come out here, you ——," and another torrent of violence.

"Pete! Pete!" shrilled the voice of another woman. "Pete! Stop! Come off now! Let 'im alone, and come home." This woman was out in the alley.

"Go away, Mary," said another voice. "If Pete wants to whip this ——," another tirade of violence, "let 'im go ahead." Friends were evidently backing the man in the house, too. He was making preparations to come out.

Genevieve heard talk of a knife and guns, and fled in

terror from the window. She ran to Miss Crawford's room, and, arousing her, hastily, dragged her back to the window.

"Oh, dear, are they fighting again? They do as sure as the week comes around," said Miss Crawford as soon as she was awake, looking out, and drawing a shawl about her.

The heavy, sickening sound of blows falling on human flesh came up from the scuffling and scrimmage of the alley. The men's voices were heard only in short, hoarse, puffs, grunts, and snorts, as they gave and received the blows. Outside the ring formed by the watchers could be heard the scolding and pleading and crying of the wives and other women.

Genevieve, wholly unused to such sounds, was falling back, sick with terror, when Miss Crawford, seeing her plight, dashed a mug of cold water in her face.

"Don't be frightened," she said excitedly. "We will call Miss Carr. Hurry!" In spite of her exhortations to courage, she herself was shaking as if with the ague.

"Where are Mr. Brown and Mr. Westfall?" gasped Genevieve, following into the hall.

"They live in another house. Miss Carr! Miss Carr! Some men are killing each other, they are killing"—and here Miss Crawford broke down in her sobbing.

It seemed that Miss Carr had already been disturbed by the noise; for she came from her door wrapped in a long cloak, as if she were going out on the street.

"It is Pete Ryan," she said coolly. "Don't mind him. It would be a good thing for everybody if some one did kill him. Stay here while I run down to the balcony. Don't wake Mrs. Purcell. Go back to your room, and don't wake her." She was running down the stairs to the nursery, the balcony of which hung directly over the alley.

Fascinated by the terror of it all, the two girls crept back to the window.

The crowd was making more noise now about the two men ; but their breathing, hoarse and stertorous, could be heard distinctly above the uproar.

"Are they dying?" whispered Genevieve, in terror ; but Miss Crawford was trembling so she could not answer.

They heard the door below open, and saw a dark figure on the balcony beneath.

"Pete Ryan!" sounded Miss Carr's clear, even voice above the confusion of scuffling and voices. "Pete Ryan! let go of that man, and get up! Don't you know you are drunk? What do you mean by frightening a lot of women? Aren't you ashamed to be rolling there like a hog in the mud? Get up, and go home to Mary!"

The voices were all silenced now. The hoarse breathing of the two clinched men was the only sound.

"I'm here, Miss Hester," faintly spoke up a woman's voice. "I'm tryin' to get 'im home."

"What man is there?" asked Miss Carr. "Isn't there a single one who has the spunk to pull those two brutes apart?"

"It was only a fair fight, Miss Hester," said some one, sullenly, ashamed to be accused by this woman.

"Oh, it's you, Seth Wood. Well, take those men apart at once. I don't want to call the police. Pete, hasn't your sense come to you enough, so that you can let us women go to sleep?"

There was considerable grumbling reluctance ; but the two men quit hold when the others interfered, and slowly arose from the ground where they had been tumbling.

"Now, Mary, take him home to bed ; and you, Kate, see that John stays inside. What if a policeman had caught you?" She stepped back into the house as the

men slunk away toward the street. In a moment she was with the two girls. "Don't be frightened," she said to Miss Radcliffe: "they were not really hurting each other. In the mines, now, men shoot when they fight; and they shoot to kill."

"Come into my room," she said kindly, seeing Genevieve still in terror. "You will get used to it in time, no doubt."

"She can sleep with me just as well," ventured Miss Crawford, timidly. "I'm all upset myself, their fighting is so terribly sickening."

"Perhaps it would be better," said Miss Carr, "and your room is away from the alley. Go to sleep if you can. Ten minutes after three,—our Sunday is beginning early."

The two girls, not being able to go to sleep for some time, found it a very good opportunity for becoming better acquainted. A little common terror is an admirable thing for bringing people together. The mutual interest demands a breaking down of formality. We are surprised into speaking straight from the heart; and, once the way is open, it is difficult to close it again.

Before the two girls had gone to sleep again, Genevieve had given an outline of her life to Miss Crawford, and learned in turn as many things from her.

"My name is Elizabeth, but they have always called me Bettine or Betty; and of course you are to do the same," she said snugly. "I am one of a family of six girls, and still my father complains that he cannot possibly spare me. Papa is a banker in a small town in the southern part of this State. He has always given us everything that we could ask, but I was not satisfied in Delavan. I thought of the great city all the time, and of the poor that were in it, and it seemed as if there must

be a place somewhere for me to help; and, finally, a professor who was lecturing there gave me a letter to Mrs. Purcell. I have been here now over a year, and I only go home in the summer and at Christmas." They talked on as girls do, until finally they dropped off to sleep.

At breakfast there was quite a discussion over the fight.

"I think you did entirely wrong," said Mr. Westfall, decidedly. "That is just the weakness of women. Now I should have called up the patrol wagon, and had the two men lodged in the station."

"What good would it have done?" asked Mrs. Purcell, mildly. "They would have been fined after being locked up over Sunday, and Heaven knows their wives are needy enough already. It is possible, too, that they could not have paid the fines. Then they would have been shipped off to spend the next thirty days with other criminals and loafers till they were ready to be turned out on society again."

"It would teach them a lesson," said Mr. Westfall.

"Who can teach them lessons now, especially through such a medium as the prison? After all, what is their crime? They have been drinking too much; but who would not drink after standing all the week before a red-hot furnace in the gas-works, as John Wood does, coated with coal dust inside and out, scorched, and working like a fiend?"

"Pete Ryan is a notorious loafer."

"I know he is; but has the city prison ever taught a man to work? No, I believe in the manual training of Mr. Brown here, for the boys. I wish we could give them more of it; but for the men, at least, the prison is hopeless."

The discussion was interrupted here by a swarm of little ragamuffins gathering around the dining-room win-

dows. The dining-room was in the basement, and the ground outside afforded an excellent view down on to the neatly spread table.

"Give us an orange," shouted one, rapping on the glass of the window.

"Let us in to play checkards," demanded another.

Then they began to dance, throwing sand up against the glass, and pressing their dirty faces up close, to see if they were attracting attention.

"I'll go out and settle them," said Mr. Westfall, angrily.

"No, let me go," said Mrs. Purcell. "I want to speak to Taffy, anyway; and I see that he is leading the dance."

She went out on the steps, and gave them full five minutes of conversation, the result being that the boys went quietly away.

"They want attention more than anything else," she said on returning. "They do not really mean to be hateful."

After breakfast Genevieve climbed up to the family sitting-room on the second floor, to await Mrs. Purcell and the conference. To amuse herself, she walked to the window and stood looking out over the city. It is very well, when one has come into a new place, to get acquainted with the surroundings. She told herself that she would not have been so frightened at the fight if she had known before just what kind of houses were across the alley, and if she had been used to the inhabitants peacefully coming and going. It was not a pleasant outlook to-day. The weather had changed in the night, and low clouds were scudding before a cold wind. In the little pocket street below the dust was flying and swirling. Such ugly dust, too, filled with bits of soiled paper and a thin cloud of smoke and fine ashes! She could see now

where the smoke came from. The boys that had been teasing them at breakfast had built a fire in the street, and, like wild Indians of the prairie, were standing around the smoke and the blaze, holding out their sprawling hands to the heat, and throwing back their heads and winking as the smoke flew up in their eyes. How desolate and untamed it all looked! How hopeless, if one thought to reform it! Now a little girl was going diagonally across the open, carrying a tin pail for beer, and stopping to make faces at the boys, who were evidently calling her names. Suddenly the boys all began to run into the alleys without any visible cause for alarm, but plainly very much in earnest. Soon the cause appeared in the shape of a blue-coated policeman sauntering down the street. The patrolman walked up to the fire, kicked the brands in different directions, and stamped out the flames from the coals. Then he walked on; but no sooner had he turned the corner than the boys were back, shaking their fists in his direction, and gathering and rekindling their fire. In five minutes it was burning more brightly than ever. The policeman would not return for three hours. How easy to evade the law, if we like! how spicy the risk of being caught! It must be very stupid to live in this neighbourhood and not be a criminal. The chimneys of the gas factories were smoking steadily away, as if they had never known Sunday since they began their existence. The great brown tanks were slowly rising, inflated with the supply of gas for the night. Under the long, low slate roof of the factories the jarring roar of the sliding coal was heard in regular intervals; and every time with the sound the flames would leap up from the iron chimneys in the roof, and flag and pale in the gray daylight.

Below and across the street the little bedraggled row of

wooden houses seemed more pitiable than it had the day before. Even the smoke had no spirit, but slunk sullenly to the ground.

A few harsh drops of rain began to patter in the dust. The wind moaned around the corner. Genevieve was thinking of home, of guests who might be coming for dinner. It may be that she was thinking a little wistfully, when the sitting-room door opened and Mrs. Purcell came in.

"I wonder if you are good at millinery," she began in her cheery, domestic way. "Now here is a mourning bonnet, a loan bonnet we call it; for it goes the rounds of many funerals. That is why we have to change it a little every time, so that it will not be recognized. Poor Mrs. Thompson's baby died last night, and the funeral will be this afternoon. It was fortunate for Mrs. Thompson that the child died on a Saturday; for she works in a tobacco factory, and might lose her place if she stayed out a day."

Mrs. Purcell held out the shabby bonnet frame to Genevieve. "If we can just shift the veil about, so, I think it will give quite a different effect," she said, tipping her head to one side, pursing her mouth and closing one eye.

"Why not lay two plaits of the crepe across the top," suggested Genevieve, critically, "and let the folds fall straight behind?"

"Good! We shall prize new ideas on this bonnet," said Mrs. Purcell. "Now that I remember, I sewed the veil on my way for Mrs. Ericson, when her husband was killed in the elevator. Are you clever with your fingers, my dear? Do take it, and put it up ship-shape."

"I have often done little odds and ends for ourselves at home," said Genevieve, proudly. "Father says I would have made a good dressmaker." She took the

black stuff, and sat down in a chair by the fire, the older woman bringing her a work-basket.

"Suppose we talk while we work," she said, looking at the young girl fondly. "So you are willing to go into the charities?"

"It seems to me the most useful field there is at first, and it will bring me in contact with so many of the poor."

"Not so hard to get that, you will find," with a sad shake of the head. "Moreover, charity work brings you into very disagreeable contact, and with the most disagreeable classes. It is apt to warp and ruin the most charitable nature. One soon gets a morbid suspicion that all poor people are beggars and liars."

"I believe you said the greatest need was in the charity work," faltered Genevieve, timidly.

"That is just it, and I made up my mind long ago to sacrifice you. Now I am trying to discourage you. A guilty conscience, a guilty conscience, I suppose."

"Some one must be sacrificed," said Genevieve. "Why not I as well as anybody?"

Mrs. Purcell might have said that she liked the intelligence and appreciation of her face, but she rarely said personal things.

"Yes, yes, yes," she mused sadly. "Some one has got to do the work. I see no way out of that. Miss Crawford is killing herself as it is, and we have promised a relief station to the Associated Charities. Some one must do the work; but you will find that you have very little money at your disposal."

"I suppose what they need is not so much money as advice and personal sympathy," said Genevieve, remembering her lectures at college.

"You can judge in time, perhaps," was the non-com-

mittal answer. If Genevieve's appreciation had not been of the finest, she would not have known that in some vague way the stiff casing of black silk had grown stiffer. She felt in some way that she was very young, that she was speaking without the right of experience; and yet the way was not open for her to confess it.

"What do you think of that?" she asked, turning the conversation to the bonnet, which she held out for Mrs. Purcell's criticism.

"It will be a great comfort to Mrs. Thompson, and I am sure will be very becoming."

"Is she long and thin?" asked Genevieve, with the impression that all poor women are long and thin.

"Oh, no, she is short and fat," corrected Mrs. Purcell. "She has full cheeks and a double chin."

"Then it will not do at all," said Genevieve, aghast. "I must do it all over. How stupid of me not to inquire first!"

"And of me not to tell you in the beginning. However, it is no unusual method in dealing with the poor. Make the bonnet; and, if it doesn't fit the head, let the blame fall on the head. I suppose twenty years have hardened me."

"Is it twenty years?" Genevieve was beginning to ask, but was interrupted by a tap on the door.

It was the cook. "Mrs. Purcell, the boys are at the kindling in the cellar. They've made a long wire hook, and they're pulling the wood out between the bars for their fire. Mr. Brown and Mr. Westfall are at church; and the boys only spit at me, and use such violence of language that no decent woman can bear."

"I will come down," replied Mrs. Purcell, quietly. "Perhaps the bonnet will get on better with your new knowledge." And she smiled encouragingly.

That was all of the anticipated discussion. There

were guests at dinner ; and in the afternoon Neville drove up in a smart trap, and insisted on taking Genevieve out. They were the wonder of the neighbourhood as they drove away, and both feared some remark that would set the crowd hooting. The boys were respectful enough, however, and stood staring in evident admiration. The drive in the cool air was invigorating ; and, Mrs. Purcell being out during the evening, Genevieve spent the time in her room reading. She was sleepy early that night, and by nine o'clock the neighbourhood was as quiet as that of her own home.

V.

THE next morning Genevieve began on her first case.

"You may as well plunge into the middle of things," said Miss Crawford, cheerily. "We will give you the first one that calls."

The first of the dilapidated women who sit in rows proved to be one such as Genevieve had been accustomed to see applying for position as maid at her own home or that of her friends, except that in this case the woman was more shabbily dressed. Indeed, her dress was a surprise to Genevieve. She had always supposed that the poor wore shawls on their heads, and that their skirts hung scantily about them; while here was a woman asking for money who was wearing a hat loaded with bedraggled plumes and red flowers and ribbons, and who also wore a bulky, heavy skirt cut in the style of the season.

Genevieve pretended to be listening to the story, but she was all the time thinking of something else. What was it that made this woman different from her mother's servants? Why should she be begging for bread? Was she lazy? Did she have a husband who drank? Did she herself, perhaps, drink, or, maybe, eat opium?

Many of these questions were answered in the woman's story as she recited it, if Genevieve had only been listening.

Finally, the woman came to a pause; and Genevieve saw that she was weeping. How strange that she did not feel affected in very sympathy! She had an impulse to pinch herself to see if she were really awake.

The woman dried her eyes, with many apologies for the emotion. Genevieve learned her name and address,

and promised to go to see her in the morning. "I will go this afternoon," she was thinking as she promised. "Perhaps she is cheating me, and will be ready for receiving to-morrow." She ushered her out as soon as she could, and hurried away up to her room to think the matter over before going.

Luckily, Miss Crawford had few callers that morning, and little more need of her assistance. When the luncheon bell rang in the dining-room, Genevieve was still thinking over her strange experience.

"You may as well go calling with me before you go to look up your case," said Miss Crawford. "I am going to see the Farleys this afternoon."

By two o'clock they were dressed, and ready for the street. Genevieve walked timidly along, marvelling at her companion's composure. Miss Crawford was laughing and chatting merrily, occasionally nodding to some one as they passed or calling the children by name. They were entering one of the most miserable of the streets, but the girl was as cheerful and thoughtless as if they were promenading the boulevard. In the middle of a story she paused before a dark passage between two houses. "This is the place," she said. "They live upstairs in the rear cottage. Shall I go first? It's pretty dark."

She ran down the steps from the sidewalk,—all the houses of this neighbourhood having been built on ground at least eight feet lower than the street,—and made her way without stumbling along the dark passage. Genevieve kept close behind her, and tried to think that no one was following to rob them.

"Are you sure this is the place?" she asked by way of conversation.

"Oh, yes, two hundred and ten. I've been here lots of

times. Come through this door." And she led the way across a narrow court. A low, two-story cottage was in the rear of a larger house, not more than ten feet from it. Miss Crawford opened the door, and began climbing narrow stairs just inside.

On the landing she knocked loudly at the door.

"What a heavy knock!" said Genevieve, involuntarily.

Miss Crawford laughed. "Oh, I used to knock gently at first; but now I pound for them to open."

"Come in," said a woman's voice from the inside.

Miss Crawford opened the stubborn door, which seemed inclined to resent the intrusion.

"Good afternoon, Mrs. Farley," she said, stepping in and pulling Genevieve after her. "I have brought you a new friend, Miss Radcliffe."

"Why, I declare, if 'tain't Miss Crawford, Nellie! Come in, Miss Crawford." And she hastened to make room for the company.

Another woman came slouching in from a doorway somewhere at the back. The room seemed filled with the four, and Genevieve could not breathe the foul atmosphere. How dim and dismal it was! and everywhere wet clothes were hanging from lines stretched across the room. Whenever the women moved, they were obliged to stop and stoop under the clothes-lines. Their tousled heads, their red faces and eyes that gleamed in the semi-darkness, made the wondering girl think of the pictures of South Sea Islanders she had seen in books of her childhood, as they crept about in their huts to keep from striking their heads on the thatch.

She was almost stifled with the heat. Though it was a bright autumn day outside, every window and door was close shut, and there was a roaring fire in the cook-stove. A smell of frying pork burdened the air; and this,

mingled with the steam of the drying clothes, made the place almost unbearable.

"Take a seat, miss," said the older woman, clearing a chair of a pile of soiled linen, which she threw on the floor, and wiping the seat with her apron. Genevieve was thankful enough for it, though she had been warned previously never to sit down in one of these houses by a lady in the church Aid Society who had visited the poor for twenty years. But Miss Crawford was sitting down, and chatting as if nothing were the matter. An ironing-board was stretched from the table to the back of a chair. The younger woman began working at a skirt that was hanging on it, listening as well to the conversation. Genevieve could see her head only by peering under a line of the clothes, though her skirt was always in plain view.

"And how are you, Mrs. Farley?" Miss Crawford was saying.

"But poorly, but poorly, thank you, Miss Crawford, for asking. You see with me, dear, it's different from you,—getting old as I am, and with my rheumatiz an' my troubles." And here she went off into a garrulous account of all the aches and pains she had had in the last fortnight, giving each in chronological order, and describing her remedies for each and the relief that came or the failure. She was a wiry little woman, with thin black hair like an Indian's, bright, bead-like, shining eyes, and a frame still well knit and serviceable. As she talked first to one and then to the other, her story gradually came out. She was born in the south of Ireland, and grew up in the country. She had come to America later on, and had served in some of the best families in Boston in her time. Then she had married, and kept house till her husband died; and she had come West to Nellie.

As Genevieve looked at Nellie, she saw what free America could do for improvements. The girl was in every way more coarse and vulgar than her mother. A flabby slattern in build, she slouched about her work in aimless fashion. Her face was full and red, her eyes were listless and staring. She listened stupidly to the story of the well-organized little woman, her mother, and seemed to feel a dull pride in the importance her misery was taking.

Genevieve fairly cringed as Miss Crawford put her searching questions. What right had they to run into such privacy? And yet the women seemed to think it no intrusion.

The story was simple enough. The girl, Nellie, had married a year ago, and was happy in the beginning. Then there was a baby to be born, and by that time her husband had tired of her. Genevieve could not feel very bitter toward him, when she looked at the woman. Well, the man had been gone five months now, and never a word of his whereabouts. The baby was four months old. They brought it out for inspection.

"How cunning!" said Miss Crawford, peeping into the dirty bundle of flannel, and touching the baby's cheeks with her finger. But even she did not offer to take the child, though she apologized afterward to Genevieve as they were on their way back to the Settlement.

Meanwhile the mother looked on fondly enough, until her forgotten flat-iron had scorched a brown spot in the skirt she was ironing.

"They have a hard time to make a living," explained Miss Crawford in the interlude caused by the brown spot. "There is so little washing to do, and there are so many to do it."

As Genevieve looked at the dingy garments on the

line, she felt little surprise that the two women had difficulty in getting work.

They talked a few minutes longer, till Genevieve was almost fainting for the want of air. She even staggered as they reached the little court below. The women were calling their adieus down to them.

"You will be all right when you have been here a year," said Miss Crawford, encouragingly. "I have got so I hardly mind it. Isn't that a hateful man to desert those poor women and the baby? What brutes men are! I think they must be the most selfish things in the world. Just think of the fight Sunday morning. But, then, there is papa," she said, reflecting a moment.

The two girls parted at the corner, Genevieve going to visit her "case" with a heavy feeling in her heart. She found the woman in a basement, living in two musty rooms on a fairly respectable street. The woman was surprised at her coming, but there was no need to conceal that she was in want of aid. A bare table, a stove, two chairs, and a bed was all there was in the house. There was some bread on the table, however; but the dishes were unwashed, though long dried after using.

Two children were lounging about. The father was out looking for work. The woman said he had been out of work eleven weeks, and there seemed no reason to doubt it.

The woman sat and begged in a pleading, whining tone that made the visitor hard instead of sympathetic. She listened this time, however, more closely, and tried to see where, in some way, a lever might be found that would raise these poor people from their present condition. She promised to call again in the morning to see the husband and try to get him some work. It was all she could think of at the moment. It was all she could

think of, in fact, after she reached home, though the problem kept itself before her all the time.

So her work had begun ; and how helpless she was in the doing !

VI.

TO get work, only to get work for the people, was the one question that kept the young girl awake and thinking long into the night. It was the one mission that kept her moving through the day, for work was the only test of sincerity. If she had it to offer, and if it was accepted, there was no almsgiving needed. If the chance was avoided and shunned with paltry excuses, then she need have no compunction in turning a man adrift. But always this work-test was wanting. The men said they could not get work; and who could say that they were not speaking the truth, when she knew that many of the most active and earnest men had been tramping the streets hopeless for months, and when she herself, with her influence and rich friends, could not find vacancies for one in a hundred of the applicants?

When, in the beginning, she had through indefatigable search succeeded in placing a man, she felt that she had done some real good to society, and was pleased to go on looking further, though she saw that what she did was as but a drop in the ocean.

“Still, it is one person’s share,” she argued. “No one can expect to solve the whole social problem.”

Then would come the reaction,—a reaction that would sicken the heart, and would leave her for days spiritually prostrate. Perhaps the man whose suppliant and helper she had been failed either through incompetency or a lack of desire to do well. Or perhaps she would hear of how some capable man had been turned away because her incapable applicant had been taken. Perhaps the other man, the competent one, had been watching this opening for months, only to see at length that, because another less worthy than himself had secured a girl’s

social influence, he was crowded out. How would such a man feel toward her and her work? she asked herself. She came to feel so girlishly weak in the great economic struggle around her that it seemed as if, wherever she put her meddling hand, she compassed only injustice and wrong. Still, she struggled on. She could not get away and go home now in helpless confession of her incapability. She looked at Miss Crawford's cheerful face, and took courage.

Meanwhile her friends and family were complaining bitterly of her neglect, and seeking to convince her that her new occupation was wearing her into ill-health and ruin.

Maynard Neville was particularly severe in his denunciation of what he called "Genevieve's senseless fad." "She is getting to be positively stupid," he complained. "I take her out driving or to the theatre, and all the time she is gazing off into space, and is so absent-minded that she can't answer a question intelligently. Why, she is getting dark circles under her eyes, mooning about sentimentally over some dirty beggar's troubles. I have no patience with her! Why doesn't she send the beggar to me? I should give him a dollar, and he'd go away blessing me and her. Instead, she prefers to pry into his affairs and give sympathy, and what she calls 'personal assistance.' The result is, she finds that the beggar is a rascal, and he finds that her sympathy is the spiritual kind that does not help him to a supper; and they both go away disgusted."

But, in spite of arguments and entreaties, Genevieve would not go away for the holidays. A house party had been planned for Christmas week at Beechwood, the home of her uncle, the Radcliffe homestead in Canada. There were the wonders of Niagara in winter, the tobogganning,

the sleighing and snow-shoe parties. At night there was the merry company about the great open fireplace under the stairway in the high, roomy hall. Always before the young girl had been the life of the party.

This year they were trying to be merry without her; and some of them, at least, found it dull business. Neville was naturally the one who suffered most. At first he had declared that he should not go at all. He had finally yielded at her earnest entreaties, but had been able to endure the dullness only a few days. On Christmas morning he took the train for Chicago, and cursed his light-hearted fellow-travellers all the way because they seemed to find pleasure in the landscape and each other.

He found Chicago little better than Beechwood. To be sure, he was near his fiancée; but what was the advantage of that, if her time and her thoughts were given to the dirty beggars around Settlement House instead of to him? He spent the evening at the club, drinking Martini cocktails alone, which was very depressing and rather vulgar.

By morning, however, his anger had cooled a little. He went over to Settlement House early, picturing to himself all the way Genevieve's gentle, pouting reproof of his foolishness in returning, and her gradual relenting and final forgiveness.

The weather was bitter cold. Old settlers said they had not known such a winter for thirty years. It pierced through his fur-lined coat, and chilled him to the very marrow. He had taken an electric car, and even the line of fire under the wheels seemed cold and blue. Whenever the squeaking door was pushed open, the blast fairly stopped his breath.

He got off at the Settlement street, already familiar to him, and hurried toward the shelter of the house. It did

not seem so desolate to-day. Perhaps they would ask him to luncheon. There was something to check him, however, as he turned in at the gate. A great many people were coming and going in a double procession. The young man caught his breath. Could it be that something had happened? A second glance, however, reassured him; and he began to mount the stone steps. He noticed that the people were all carrying baskets. Those going in had empty baskets, those coming out were struggling with all that they could carry. At the door he had no need to ring. It was almost constantly open. The ugly, institutional hall was nearly as bleak and cold as the street. The snow on the floor was not melted. In the crowded parlour he saw Genevieve, wrapped in her heavy cloak as if to go out, but seated at the table with a ledger before her. As the crowding, miserable people jostled about her, she was trying to organize their movements, and to write down the name and address of each one as he went by with his basket. A young man, also dressed for the street, was standing in the hall, directing the people with empty baskets down to the store-room and those with the filled baskets through the parlour, to be registered by Miss Radcliffe.

Neville walked into the parlour, and spoke formally to Genevieve. She looked up, startled for a moment; and a jealous pang shot through him as he felt how far he had been from her thoughts. She looked half dead with fatigue and worry. "Nothing has happened?" she gasped, when she saw him standing in front of her.

"Nothing, only that I found the place intolerably stupid," he said, sulking. "I came back to see if you could not find time for a little amusement."

She glanced at the line of baskets that was beginning to crowd restlessly, pushed all the time from behind.

"We are terribly busy," she said pleadingly. "This cold snap has brought the poor here in thousands. Perhaps you could go up to the sitting-room, and wait a half-hour. I may get a substitute in time. Do," she entreated, almost crying. "Mrs. Baxter," she began again in monotonous tones,— "Mrs. Baxter, 110 Wesson Street. All right. Next."

Neville strode out of the room. It gave him a savage pleasure to jostle a woman with her basket. What right had she here, anyway, wearing the life out of the girl he was to marry? At first his rage carried him out on to the street, vowing that he would go back to Beechwood that day, that he would never set foot in this slum-hole again. But gradually, as he walked, his reason came back to him. Perhaps the cold hastened the action. He would be a brute, too, if he were not affected by the pleading of the soft eyes, the haggardness and care of Genevieve's face. "I *am* a selfish brute," he said, suddenly turning about. "I will go back, and wait all day till I see her."

This time he only glanced into the reception-room as he passed the door, to see that the cloaked and hooded figure was still bending over her book. Then he mounted the stairs, and rapped at the sitting-room door. "Come in," called a voice from inside. A girl was seated at the piano, turning over some music. She was a young girl, peculiar-looking, with short hair and dowdily dressed, he thought. He supposed it was Miss Carr. He had often heard Genevieve speak of her music. He introduced himself with some stiffness.

"Oh, you are Mr. Neville." The girl smiled hospitably, though her eyes were more scrutinizing than he liked.

"Won't you sit down and be as comfortable as possible

before the grate? The wind from the hall penetrates every room of the house, but it is all for the good of the poor," she said with a humility that was plainly mockery.

"What is happening downstairs, anyway?" asked Neville, bluntly. "I thought I had made a mistake, and got into the county relief office."

"It is not far from it," said Miss Carr, with scorn that was now unmistakable. "The Mayor has raised ten thousand dollars for the suffering poor during this cold weather, and downstairs they are doling out one thousand of it in impartial fifty-cent doles. At this rate, it won't last long; but they are making it go very well, because they buy everything at a discount, even on the wholesale rates, in the name of the suffering poor."

"I should think at least that men might do the work," said Neville, doggedly.

"On the contrary, to me it seems quite the work for women," said Miss Carr.

"I notice that *you* keep away from it," said he, smiling, and looking into her eyes.

Her shoulders went up and her hands out in expressive foreign fashion. Her head, too, was tilted coquettishly on one side.

"She is not so plain as I had supposed," thought Neville. "A good modiste and hair-dresser would make her quite presentable."

They talked for some time,—about music, about literature, and about art. Miss Carr talked surprisingly well, but all the time Neville was growing more and more restless.

"I'll tell you what I'm going to do," Miss Carr said suddenly, "though I hate it more than I hate death,—yes, as I hate ugliness itself. I'm going to put on my cloak and hood and overshoes, and go down and take

Genevieve's place for an hour. I will send her up here to you, and I want you to talk all the time about things a hundred miles from Chicago."

"You are really awfully good," he said gratefully. "Not a bad sort, after all, when you know her," he added to himself, when she had danced away out of the room.

In ten minutes Genevieve came in. She had taken off her cloak and hood, and she came and sat down by the fire. Her hands and lips were blue with cold, but her manner was all he had pictured.

"It was very, very naughty of you to come sulking away, spoiling their sport for me," she said, pouting in the way that always pleased him."

Miss Carr was left fretting downstairs for more than the hour she had volunteered.

VII.

GENEVIEVE went back to the parlour with the feeling of one who has slept and dreamed a pleasant dream. Once more the methodical tally-keeping began. This rush of the cold weather had been on them now for three days, and she was growing hardened and dazed for lack of time to despair in. The first day she had kept up from sheer excitement at the sudden change. The second day she had been rebellious, wondering why such conditions were allowed to exist. To-day she was worn out with work and worry, and went through her part like a machine.

After a hasty luncheon in the kitchen, she exchanged places with Miss Crawford, as had been their custom the two preceding days, and sat in the dining-room to interview the applicants before they received their baskets of provisions or their supply of coal or clothing, as the case demanded. There was no time for the stipulated investigation. It was give, give, recklessly, to all now; to each, as nearly as possible, what he asked. There had been fear of a bread riot in the city, and the wealthy had been liberal with their charities. Genevieve felt the wrong of it all, that she should be doing the disagreeable work for them and they should escape with the easy gift of the money. She had changed her views in many things since she came to live at Settlement House. But this stress was not a time to experiment with theories. Here was work to be done, or fellow-beings would die of cold and hunger. She knew that the method was a bad one; but for the time it was her best, and she could not stop to criticise.

The afternoon was wearing on. She had already lighted the gas, when suddenly she had a curious feeling

that she was in a human presence. In the weariness of the last two hours she had been telling off the people around her as if they had been merely animals rather than men and women who were coming to her for their food. She looked up, rather startled at this new sensation. A man was standing sullenly before her. He was not looking her in the eyes. He was only a poor working-man, and she felt strangely reassured at this. Nevertheless, she arose, and walked over to the door, and locked it. There was no one else in the room at the time. The press of applicants was beginning to slacken.

She came back, and sat down before the man, offering him a chair as she did so. He sat down uneasily on the edge of it, twirling a shabby hat in his hand. She looked at him curiously, and neither spoke for a moment.

The man was not old,—about thirty, she thought,—and had a fresh, ruddy look that did not seem to speak of starvation. He was of medium height, of sturdy frame, with a large square head and a smooth white brow, over which scant blond hair hung carelessly. There was something about the man—something about the delicate mouth and the firm, affectionate chin—that drew her to him. Instinctively, however, she began with the usual question,—

“What is your name?”

A burning blush spread over his face. He tried to keep it back, but succeeded only in whitening a space about his mouth, where the muscles were tense with drawing. For a moment he lifted his eyes, which were blue, and met hers defiantly.

“John Wade,” was all he said; and again his eyes sought the nervously twirling hat.

“Where do you live?” was the second of her regular questions.

"One hundred and nine Division Street."

"Married?"

"Wife is dead."

"Any children?"

"Two." But his lip quivered here, and something like a sob moved his shoulders.

"I wish you would tell me what you want," she said kindly. His trouble was bringing back her own.

"I want some money," he said bluntly; "and I don't know where under heaven to turn for it. I don't want any of your baskets of groceries. They won't be any help in my case. We are out of coal. We are out of flour. I owe seven months' rent and twenty dollars for the wife's funeral expenses. I haven't had work for twenty-two weeks. That was before the wife died. Now the little girl is sick"—He stopped here, and seemed trying to swallow something that grew and groaned in his throat.

The girl's sympathy was flowing like a river; but her voice was only kind, as it had been with all of the others.

"What is your trade?" she asked.

"Machinist," he answered after a pause; and then he began again, warmly: "If I could only get work! I know how to run several machines in the factories, and I can give good references from all of them. But the work don't exist. I get up in the morning, and I tramp and beg for work till I am sick to beg any longer. The bosses ain't got it to give. I hate to go home so at night that I just walk around the streets till I am forced to. It is so hard to see the children, and no work. Now I've pawned everything in the house. I've hunted for work every day, steady, since the funeral,—that's nineteen weeks coming Tuesday. I've offered to do anything,—cut wood or shovel in the streets,—but it seems that the

work don't exist; or, if it does, it's for some one who has a pull or is in politics."

It was an old story to Genevieve now. She had heard it constantly from helpless men since October. To-day her rebellion had reached its height. She could contain her wrath no longer.

"Why don't you men band together, and demand your rights?" She had risen from her chair and was pacing the room. Her eyes were flashing with mingled fire and tears, and her white hands were clenched in excitement.

"Why don't you fight? Oh, I wish I were a man! What is the matter with you cowards? Isn't the work yours by God's right? Isn't there plenty to be done? Look at the filth in the streets! Look at the paving to be laid, the houses to be built for the poor! Everywhere the city is crying for work; and over there, not a mile away, the rich are lazy in luxury. Oh, why do you stand it at all? Why don't you band together, and rebel?"

She stopped still before him, and stood panting and trembling with the thought of the meaning of all she had been saying to him. Suppose he should go away fired by the words, and suppose he should break into her father's house!

But the man seemed in no way stirred by her outburst. He sat looking thoughtfully for a time; and, when his eyes finally rose to her own, they had the calmness of eyes that have been seeking truth in pure reason.

"I suppose," he said slowly,—“I suppose that the reason we don't is that we haven't got spunk enough, for one thing. We lack leaders; and, then, most of us don't half realize our condition. It's a big thing,—is government; and we can't solve all the problems by fighting.”

“Tell me about the little girl,” said Genevieve, ashamed of her extravagance. “Is she very sick? Have you had a doctor?”

"I don't know as she is so sick," he stammered; "but she hasn't eat much for two or three days, and"—

"Do you mean to say that you have no food in the house?" gasped Genevieve, breathlessly.

"What can a man do?" he said pleadingly, as if he expected her to strike him. "I've pawned everything that will give me a cent, and I can't steal work."

Genevieve began to cry softly.

"Don't, don't do that," he pleaded, his own voice heavy and shaking. "There's no reason for you to feel so about it. We're used to it. There are plenty of others in the same fix." But the girl kept on crying silently, till at length he could bear it no longer.

He walked away to the window, and stood looking out into the darkening street.

"It's not so bad, you know," he said, coming back after a struggle. "There's coal enough to last till to-morrow, and they had some bread at noon. The little girl didn't seem to take to bread, somehow, though there won't be even that this evening unless I get some work. A man almost promised me a job in his cellar if I would come around for an hour in the morning. I suppose we'll get on to-night."

"Who is staying with the children when you are out?" asked Genevieve, drying her eyes.

"Oh, an old woman; but I wouldn't tell her. She's gone without before this to give to them, and Lord knows when she had her last mouthful."

"Wait here till I come back," said the girl, and left him sitting by the table. She ran up to her room on the third floor without giving a look to right or left. On the dressing-table lay her small purse. She opened it, and counted out its contents. There were twelve dollars and sixty cents. Taking it in her hand, she ran down again

to the dining-room. John Wade was still sitting by the table. She walked up to him, and put the money into his hand. She did not let it fall from her grasp at once, but placed her hand in his as she spoke to him. "Here are twelve dollars and sixty cents," she said hurriedly. "It's all that I have with me to-night; but this does not come from the relief fund. I want you to remember that. It's my very own,—at least, as much as anything I have is mine."

His strong workman's hand had closed on hers firmly.

"Some day I may pay it back," he said steadily; "but, when I do, it will not be in money."

She went on, still hurriedly, as before: "I shall come to see you in the morning. I shall come early. You must stay in till I come. I have your number here."

"One hundred and nine Division," said John Wade. He was still holding her hand, his eyes looking into her own.

"You must go now," said Genevieve; "for there are others waiting to see me. Good-bye." She was smiling sweetly.

"Can I do anything for you?" she said, turning to a woman at the door.

John Wade walked out into the cold without so much as buttoning his old coat about him. He had not known an overcoat all winter, and his hat was too small for his head. The workingman was not without dignity, however, as he walked away from the house.

There is yet one kind of giving that does not blast the receiver.

VIII.

THE relentless cold had not abated when on the following morning Genevieve set out to make her promised visit. She had been thinking more than was her wont about this new case of poverty that had been presented to her, and with results which varied according to her mood. Sometimes she blushed as she recollected her grave professional error in putting so much money into a suppliant's hands. She knew nothing at all of this man, and she had been too often deceived to feel sure that this might not be another case of deception. Perhaps the man was a drunkard, who would give a supper to his children and carouse with the money that was left. Perhaps, even, the story of the children was not true. In the past months she had been dealing so largely with misrepresentations that she had come to look on all humanity with distrust.

At other times her heart would give credence to all that he had told her. It was the man's manner more than his words that told the real story, and the impression that lingered with her was one of truth and sincerity.

The sharp cold of the street as she stepped into it made all thinking impossible; and, hurrying along through the deserted ways, she found employment enough in keeping her breath from being snatched from her by the keen wind and in keeping her footing in the face of the blast. There was still enough consciousness left for a constant pity for all the poor, as she ran past the little shut-up wooden shells of houses, and wondered if the inhabitants were alive. As it was now nearly eight o'clock, the men had been an hour at their work and the streets were almost clear of people; for those who were not compelled to be out were shunning the open air.

Genevieve was hurrying on, glancing occasionally at the numbers over the doors and thinking of the distance to the number "one hundred and nine." Suddenly she came to the river, and there were still several numbers to be counted. She was across the bridge where the cutting wind was driving full force, and to her dismay saw that there were no more houses for a block or two, but that the ground was entirely occupied by an enormous grain elevator.

"A false address," she was saying to herself as she ran. She was thinking more of the return through the cold than of the perfidy of the man who had evidently so successfully deceived her. It seemed hopeless in glancing ahead that she should ever find the number; but, seeing a little house back from the road in the shadow of the great iron walls, she ran down the alley that led to it, thinking that she at least might find shelter and warmth as she made her inquiries before returning.

The house seemed to be inside of an enclosure. In her hurry she did not see the gate at the front, and ran to a door in the rear. Perhaps, after all, it was not inhabited,—it was a desolate, bleak-looking place; but, yes, there was smoke from the chimney. She knocked at the shabby kitchen door. The door opened almost at once, and she thrust herself inside without thinking. She had but one desire now, which was to escape the bitter chill of the air. Nevertheless, she was speaking her excuse.

"Can you tell me where one hundred and nine Division Street is?" And then she saw that the man she was seeking was before her.

"You are early," he said bashfully, taking a great deal of time in closing the door and arranging an old coat on the sill to keep the wind from entering.

The room was warm, with a roaring fire in the little kitchen stove ; but there was a closeness in the atmosphere that almost awoke a regret for the cold freshness outside. A mingling of the odours of cooking and sleeping in close, unventilated rooms Genevieve was accustomed to now. Moreover, there was to be noticed here that peculiar poverty smell that haunts the garments for days, and is indescribable, unless one has handled soiled rags that have long been lying in damp and close places.

"Sit down," said the man, awkwardly, offering an old chair by the stove. "If I'd thought you would venture out to-day, I'd gone over and told you not to come. There was really no need of your coming after giving me what you did yesterday."

She saw that he had been washing the breakfast dishes. When she interrupted him, his sleeves were rolled up ; and he wore no coat, leaving his arms bare to the elbow.

Genevieve noticed that the arms were chubby, almost like a child's, but gracefully turned and with both suppleness and strength at the wrist. His face, too, was round and in keeping with the arms. A short black pipe was in his mouth when she entered ; but he had quickly removed this in honour of the presence of a lady, and was tapping it meditatively over the stove hearth, and looking to see if the ashes had all fallen from it.

"I was so chilled," said Genevieve, coming to herself.

John Wade began busying himself with the fire, the coal smoke pouring out into the room as soon as he uncovered the stove.

Genevieve had time to glance at the surroundings. She was in a low room, though not so small as she was accustomed to in the cottages or tenements of the poor. This had been designed for the kitchen of a family that had some regard for convenience and domestic comfort.

A door on one side opened into what was probably a store-room and pantry, while another led into the main part of the house. There were two windows in the back and one on each side of the door by which she had entered, and another as well on the end. These were screened by old-fashioned blue shades made of stiff cambric or cambric that suggested past stiffness. The small window-panes were white with thick frost, and all the nails and iron-work about the door were covered with chill white clusters of crystals.

There was little furniture in the room. A table with the half-washed dishes, another chair like the one in which she was sitting, a cupboard for china and table furnishing,—that was all, except that close by the stove an old baby-carriage was standing, which soon came to be the centre of attraction; for an occupant in the shape of a baby-boy set up a wailing at sight of the stranger. The father walked over, and lifted the boy in his arms. There being no place to lay the empty pipe, it was returned to its place in his mouth. Instinctively, Genevieve's trust in the man all returned, as she saw his strong arms around the child, one hand, as he seated himself in the chair by the fire, softly rubbing the baby's head.

A little girl, who until now had been concealed behind the baby-carriage, shyly came out from her hiding-place, and, running round behind her father, softly tucked her head under his arm. The arm lifted just a little as she did so, then pressed itself closer on her head. To any one who was country-bred the suggestion would have come at once of a hen sheltering her chickens under her wings.

The child was very fair. Genevieve was immediately attracted to her. She had great, pleading, earnest blue

eyes, that shone so steady and calm. It was like the light from a planet in the clear country sky of a summer evening. The face, too, was sweetly childlike, and framed in a wealth of golden hair that was now sadly in need of combing.

"What is her name?" asked Genevieve, interested and natural at once.

"Angeline," he replied, "though we call her Lena for short."

"What a pity, when Angeline is so much prettier!"

John Wade was pleased, and showed it. It was his way to show what he felt.

"Do you think so?" he said quite simply. "I took it from a book I was reading."

"Do you read much?" she asked.

"In those days," he nodded reflectively. "Not now. Since I have been out of work so long, I can only think and think."

Just now Genevieve wished to avoid the work question.

"And the baby's name?" she asked.

"Joseph," he replied, rubbing the soft head with his hand that had not been removed, "or just Joe. I like ordinary names for boys."

"You have an ordinary name, too, Mr. Wade. You told me it was John, did you not?"

He nodded, taking his pipe from his mouth and giving it to the little girl. "Run, put it on the table," he said.

There was a pause while the child was snuggling back.

"You did not tell me your name," he said inquiringly.

"Miss Radcliffe," she answered; and then, thinking for the first time that her name sounded cold, she added,

"My given name is Genevieve."

"It is a pretty name," he said quietly, as if thinking.

"The little girl is better this morning?" inquired Gen-

evieve, after a pause, the man not taking the initiative in conversation.

"Come and see me, Lena," she said, coaxing and holding out her hands; but the child drew back in her shelter.

"You can call her Angeline, if you like," he said, as if remembering the visitor's preference for the longer form. "Run to the lady, child. Go on, go on."

The little girl stepped timidly out, and came to the lady's side. Genevieve could see that there were dark shadows under her eyes, and that her hand was weak and fluttering.

"You must give her plenty of nourishing food from now on. Buy such things as she likes."

"She is better this morning," answered the father, as the child ran back to his arms. "I bought her a bottle of medicine last night. It was what the wife always took, and it was a very good medicine. Run and show the lady the bottle," he said, turning again to the child.

It was a patent nostrum that Genevieve remembered seeing in the advertisements when a child.

She did not feel like giving a lecture on patent medicines this morning, though it was an opportunity that she would eagerly have embraced three months before, when planning her work with the poor. There was something that made this a personal matter here. She could not call the authority of the dead wife into question.

"It is proper food that she needs more than medicine," was all that she said. "Eggs and milk, with some meat and vegetables."

"I got some milk and meat last night, but eggs cost so much in the winter. They are thirty cents a dozen now," he said quite seriously, as if it were a fortune, almost. "I bought some beans," he added inquiringly. "There is a good deal of nourishment in beans, I have heard."

Genevieve believed there was. She remembered faintly a page in her physiology.

"Do you do all your own work? Do you live alone in this house?" she asked, now changing the subject.

"Yes, I do the work; but there is an old woman lives in one of the rooms in front. She minds the children when I am gone, and does not pay any rent, though for that matter I don't, either," he said, laughing uneasily; "or I haven't for the last seven months."

"How much is the rent?" This at least was a proper charity question.

"Seven dollars, but I suppose he'll let me off with less. It'll be a long time before I can pay forty-nine dollars. The landlord is good to me. He used to be my boss, and now he wants some one to look out for this property. He has never said a word about turning me out. Sometimes he says, 'Times are pretty hard, John: can't you pay me a little on the rent?' but, when I explain how it is, he always says, 'All right, John: pay when you can.' He's a poor man himself, and sees a hard time with the rest of us, though he's not in actual need. I should have gone to him last night if I had failed with you; but, if one must beg, it's easier to beg from a stranger."

"You must not speak of it as begging," said Genevieve, with feeling.

"But it *is* begging," said the man, doggedly. "We may as well call it by its name. I never begged before, though," he added after a pause, "not even when I was drinking."

"Do you drink?" asked the charity worker, taking sudden alarm.

"I used to," he said easily, and without the suspicion of the cant of a confessing sinner. "Yes, I used to drink like a fish. That was before the wife took sick, but I stopped one day."

"Because your wife was sick?" she asked with interest.

"No, it was before that. Well, I had been out of work a long time, and was getting poorer and poorer, going from bad to worse. I couldn't pass a saloon in those days without stopping in; and, as saloons are thick in these parts, you may guess I didn't get home very early of nights."

"But what made you stop?" she pursued.

"Oh, I saw what a brute I was making of myself. Of course, I had seen that all along, at times; but one day I said, 'I will stop,' and I haven't touched a drop since."

"It was hard at first, I suppose?" asked the girl, shuddering as she looked at him.

"It was a little hard," he replied, his eyes gleaming at the remembrance. "It was hardest passing my old pals. I might not have been able to do it if I had not moved away from the neighbourhood, though a man can do 'most anything if he sets his will to it. I stopped chewing tobacco at the same time. That is a nasty habit. For a time I thought I would give up smoking as well, but now I'm glad I didn't."

"I haven't made any friends since I stopped drinking," he continued by way of explanation. "Friends don't come unless a man goes to the saloon. They don't stay, either, after he's left it." There was a pause here.

"Well," he went on at length, "since the wife died, the old pipe has been great company after the children were asleep. I don't hardly know how I'd got along without that."

The little girl, hearing him talk of the pipe, ran and brought it from the table, together with a bag of tobacco.

"Not while the lady's here, Angeline," he said; but he took the pipe and held it in his hand.

There was a certain charm about his hand that Gene-

vieve had never noticed before in all of the hands she had seen,—a certain clearness and knowledge that was almost intelligence in itself. The fingers were clumsy enough and too stubbed at the end for beauty; but they did things nimbly in spite of their clumsiness, they were so perfectly trained to obey and accomplish. Genevieve had never seen the beauty of a workingman's hand before. She had thought only of gracefulness and delicacy. In this man's hand there was something besides strength and skill,—a certain rounded affection in the palm that was quite as gentle as the nature of woman, yet deep and composed as a man's. She noticed this quality of affection as the man held the bowl of the pipe. She noticed it often again when the palm was rubbing the baby's white head. Once she had gone to watch a lens-polisher at work upon lens. The fact had not touched her at the time; but now she thought of it again, and she remembered the same kind of affection as the hollow palm had fitted itself to the rounded glass.

All this time John Wade was gazing half humourously at the pipe.

"It is curious," he said, "how a man will get tied to a little bit of wood like that."

Genevieve suddenly was called to herself and the long day of charity-giving before her. She hated it now as she thought of it,—the unnatural relation with those people. It was not so delightful, playing the Lady Bountiful, as she had imagined in the past. It was much better for all to be equals.

"I must go now," she said, rising hastily. Again she became conscious of the closeness and the heat. "I am going to try to find you some work, but I know how hard that is to do; and meanwhile you must try, too. Perhaps you can run across something. How much money have you now?"

"Why, I have all that you gave me except a dollar and forty cents that I paid for some coal and the groceries."

"How much coal did you get?"

"Three baskets. I get three baskets for a quarter on the corner. It is not the best coal, but it lasts longer than two baskets of the other that they charge fifteen cents a basket for."

"How much does it cost you a ton at this rate?"

"Oh, some nine dollars. Of course, it is dearer than by the ton."

"And how much is it by the ton?"

"Five dollars, I think."

"Oh, the extravagance of being poor!" sighed Genevieve to herself; but aloud to the man she said:—

"You have got to take some money from me till you get work. It does not come from the city. This is a personal affair. Now take this bill, and get a ton of coal. You have a good place to put it?"

"Oh, yes, there's the shed."

"Well, good-bye," she said, pushing the money into his hand. "Can you come to see me Saturday night at exactly half-past seven?"

"Yes, I will come," said John Wade.

She was arranging her wraps for the cold, and he stood awkwardly by while she did it.

"It was unnecessary for you to come out in this weather," he said. "I should have understood if you had waited until it was warmer."

"But I had promised," said Genevieve, simply. "Good-bye, baby. Good-bye, Angeline." It seemed sad to think that she was going.

The father murmured something about waiting a moment, and hurried over to put the baby into the carriage. He was some time in tying him in. Genevieve waited restlessly.

Finally, it was done ; and he came toward her, passing to open the door. She thought he was going to say some word of thanks, and awkwardly turned as she stepped out so as not to seem to be running away. "Good-bye," she said again cheerily.

There was no reply ; and for a flash she looked at him, but only to drop her eyes and hurry away into the piercing cold. The strong man was quivering like a leaf.

I X.

MAYNARD NEVILLE was both surprised and pleased when a note, whose form he knew so well, summoned him to Settlement House promptly at seven o'clock on Saturday night, full twenty hours before the appointed time. The note explained that it was a business appointment, and that a favour would be demanded. But what business could be more enticing than granting favours to this capricious lady, who had her own favours to give? Promptly at seven o'clock Mr. Neville rang the institutional bell, and was ushered at once into the cosey parlour, and drawn off into one corner where he and Genevieve would be comparatively free from interruption, even though people should come and go as guests or in the performance of their various duties.

"You seem to have disposed of your daily line of needy supplicants," remarked Neville, glancing about the room. "When I was here on Wednesday, I thought that you would always remain a sort of bureau for bounty, and never fall back into your pretence of domesticity again."

"Pretence, Maynard? We are really thoroughly domestic. It does not detract from domesticity, I hope, to take an interest in our neighbours."

"In all of one's neighbours, I am afraid it does. The hearth becomes the fire of the saloon-keeper who offers a free lunch for all, without the requirement of paying for a beer. But where are the petitioners?"

"They have disappeared now, with the cold weather and the money we had to distribute. It was strange how they flocked in as soon as they scented the public gifts. Many of them came long distances on the street-cars, we found, and received things from other stations as well as ours. We were as much disgusted with the plan of in-

discriminate giving as any one; but what could we do in that bitter cold, when all of them might be and some were really needy? As it was, we ran out of supplies before the cold weather was gone; and it was bitter business sending them away empty-handed."

He was forgetting all about the poor in the simple pleasure of being near her.

"But I brought you here on business," she interrupted, "for I have a favour to ask."

"Yes, your favour. Name it: it is granted," he said gallantly.

"But it is not so easy to grant," hesitated Genevieve. "You have granted in this line before, and it may be difficult to grant what is not wholly yours."

"When you see fit to explain and be business-like" —

"Well, bluntly, I want you to try to get work in your company for another man."

"But, Genevieve, I am not" —

"I know, but this is a case of necessity."

"You know that I've already had two of your protégés placed, when there were plenty of capable applicants waiting; and you know how they turned out."

"I know, but this is different. This man is capable."

"Just what you said of the man Stevenson, who worked a week and then was drunk for two."

"But this man doesn't drink,— at least, not now."

"Oh, a reformed drunkard? Now, Genevieve!"

"No, no, no! he is not that. What can you know about him? He has not been drinking for a long time,— years, perhaps," said Genevieve, wondering if she was conveying a false impression.

"Well, the first man, Marshall, did not drink. To be sure, he did not work, either."

"Maynard, you promised. Anyway, you must wait

until you see this man; for he is coming in twenty minutes or so."

"Ah, my lady, a trap?"

"Not a trap at all,—just a little business arrangement."

"Oh, how keen you women are for business! But, my dear"—

"Don't say 'my dear': it sounds as if we were married and quarrelling."

"Now, Viva, don't you know that I don't do the hiring for the Randall Electric Company?"

"I know you don't, but the superintendent will listen to your suggestion. He knows what excellent judgment you have."

"My judgment having proved so infallible in the two previous cases."

"Nonsense! You didn't know the other men: you had not seen them, and you are going to talk with this man."

"I wonder if it will be this way when we are married," he said, looking at her fondly.

"How this way?"

"I wonder if you will have your way in everything."

"Then I am to have my way in this?"

"Why, didn't I promise before you asked?"

"Now why didn't you say that at first?"

"I did, at first."

"But I mean at first when I asked."

"That would have been at second."

"Don't be silly!"

Here they were both extremely silly, but there was nobody in the room to see them.

"But, Genevieve," he said after a pause, "you know that I can only recommend. There may not be a vacancy for weeks. What does your man do?"

"Oh, he is a machinist. He knows how to manage all sorts of complicated machinery."

"Oh, skilled labor."

"Of course."

"Then it is more difficult."

"How is that? Now you are teasing me again." And she thought how handsome he was.

"No, truly; but your skilled machinist is almost sure to turn out unskilled in the end, and something will break."

"Now wait till you see the man, and meanwhile let us talk of something else. I have a hundred things to say to you. Besides, you must go at eight or else stay to the neighbourhood party."

"The neighbourhood party? No, thank you: I don't want them coming so close. If I am going to be sociable in that line, I prefer to join a banquet with my mother's maids and the coachman some Sunday night in the kitchen. Now, if you want to be democratic, why don't you begin at home?"

"This is not what I wanted to say at all," pouted Genevieve, prettily.

She was so very pretty and Neville was so very much in love with her that she had entirely her own way, and they talked of whatever she wanted. She found time, among other things, to outline the story of John Wade, though she did not tell all that had passed nor the manner in which they had really met, "because," she said to herself, "he will not understand my ideas of equality, but will only tease and make fun of me." To Neville she spoke of the workingman as if he were only a peculiarly intelligent and advanced kind of animal that was in great suffering and needed compassion, not forgetting also to urge that the compassion would be a valuable investment.

Promptly at half-past seven the man came.

John Wade was in better spirits to-night than he had been for many a week. He had secured a full day's work cleaning a cellar, and had come home with a bright silver dollar. He carried it in his hand as he walked. Having no gloves, it was natural to keep his hands in his pockets; and, the dollar being there, it was natural for his hand to grip on it. There is a joy in the possession of a day's wage received when the day's work is done. It is different when one waits a month for one's money. Moreover, to-night John Wade was cheerful because he was going to see the lady again. All the week he had been looking forward to it. She seemed like an angel to him. "On Saturday, at half-past seven," he had said to Angeline each night as he put her to bed,—“on Saturday, at half-past seven, I am to see the lady again.”

And now the appointed hour had come, and he was bashfully dreading it as he walked toward Settlement House. He passed the gate unexpectedly. He had fully thought that he was going to turn in. "I must look at a clock in the store on the corner," he said by way of explanation. "It would not do to be too early. Too early is as bad as too late." The clock said exactly half-past seven; and he hurriedly returned to the gate, only to walk by again without even looking toward the house.

"I ought to be a little late," he said. "It might look too eager to be exactly on time." He turned in the middle of the block, and began to retrace his steps. He looked about to see if the neighbours were watching him. It seemed almost a criminal thing to be walking back and forth in front of this house. He felt quite guilty in doing it. What if a policeman should accost him? what would he say?

"I am actually getting nervous," he laughed uneasily.

He swallowed at nothing with difficulty as he reached the gate. The nothing seemed to stick fast in his throat. Then he walked steadily up the steps, and rang the bell.

"Is Miss Radcliffe in?" he asked the girl who came to the door. The girl smiled, and showed him into the parlour.

John Wade was more bashful than ever. The angel stepped out to meet him. She had on a very pretty gown. She was ten times more radiant than when he saw her before. But suddenly he drew all up into himself. There was some one with her, a handsome and elegantly dressed gentleman.

John Wade did not know whether it was the way in which the gentleman looked at him or the way in which he looked at Miss Radcliffe that made him instinctively dislike him. There was a patronizing air toward himself, though it was by no means unkind. There was a faint suggestion of patronage even to Miss Radcliffe. But there was something else stronger than that. The workman felt that he had no right to intrude upon their privacy.

"How do you do, Mr. Wade?" said Genevieve, cordially, though she did not offer her hand. "I have been speaking to a friend about you. I thought Mr. Neville might help me to find you some work."

John Wade bowed awkwardly in acknowledgment of this partial introduction. He did not notice its poverty, for he was not used to being recognized as an equal. He hardly knew what it was that he felt; but in some way the angel had become much more of an angel, though she had lost thereby a little of the human.

"Won't you sit down?" said Genevieve, taking a seat herself by way of encouragement. Neville had not risen at all.

But John Wade continued to stand, twirling his hat awkwardly.

"I oughtn't to leave the children long," he said, though he had previously told Angeline to go to bed at once, and he left the old woman in charge with instructions to stay till he returned.

"Are the children well?" asked Miss Radcliffe, sympathetically.

"Oh, yes, m'am, very well, thank you."

There was a pause. John Wade was the more disconcerted because the others seemed perfectly at ease. He turned half-way to Neville, and yet spoke half-way to Genevieve.

"Did you have any place in mind where I might ask for a job?" he said timidly.

"What can you do?" asked Neville. "Where have you worked before?"

"I am a machinist, sir. I worked three years for the Northern Union till they shut down, and then a year for the Davidson and Bell, then eight months at the Illinois Iron Works, besides short jobs here and there."

"Are you an American?"

"English. I was born in Birmingham, though I have worked in London mostly."

"How long have you been in this country?"

"Seven years and five months."

"What kind of machines have you run?" Here followed a technical discussion, intelligible only to the initiated. Genevieve listened with interest, partly because she wished to understand Maynard's work, and partly because she saw that her new man was conducting himself admirably, seeming to be entirely at home with his trade and clear and intelligent when talking about it. "At least," thought Genevieve, "this man will not

disappoint me. I hope that no other deserving man will be kept from a job for this one. Oh, dear! there seem to be too many good men in the world!" She listened to the conversation again.

"I myself am in the employ of the Randall Electric Company," said Neville.

"Oh, that's a good place to work," replied the man, his eyes wistful, and his voice slightly catching at the prospect. "I know a man who works there. That is a roomy factory to work in, with all the modern improvements."

Again they turned to technicalities. The man grew more intelligent every minute. "Why, he seems to know almost as much as Maynard," thought Genevieve, forgetting that Neville had been in his new place only a few months, and most of that time in the office rather than the factory.

"How is it that you have been so long out of work?" asked Neville.

"My old places are shut down or are running only part of a force. The bosses in the other places of the city say that they have plenty of competent men on the waiting list, men who have worked for the firm before and will stand a first chance if there is a vacancy. I can get work myself with Davidson if times look up a little, or at any of the other places if they go back to the old force. As it is, I am willing to do what I can at rough labour till there is an opening somewhere."

"Do you drink?"

"Not now. I used to drink, but I lost only one job on that account."

"Well, I have an acquaintance with the superintendent at the Randall, and I will ask him to do what he can for you; but I tell you beforehand that he probably has more

men promised now than he can handle in the year. And, if you get a place, it may be hard labour at labourer's wages."

"I am down to that, and have been for a long time since," said John Wade.

"I will give you a card," said Neville, drawing one from his case; "and you can take it to the superintendent on Monday. You had better go at two o'clock. What did you say your name is? I will make a note of it."

"John Wade."

Neville wrote the name in his note-book, and the interview seemed to be at an end.

"I have to thank you both," said the workingman, turning to Genevieve.

"Not at all," replied the girl, in her formal fashion. They seemed to be taking it for granted that he was going now.

"Good-night," he said, as he turned to leave them.

"Good-night." "Good-night."

With them there was the feeling that they were together: with him, the feeling that he was alone. As he walked homeward, the sensation seemed to grow with him. Work, the phantom that he had chased so long and hopelessly, was materializing into reality now. He thought that he ought to be the happiest man in all the world, with the knowledge that neither he nor his children would be starving soon for bread. And now it was not so. It was true that a great outward weight seemed lifted from his breast,—a pressure that had been cramping and suffocating him. He could breathe freely in the relief from that; but, once its pain was silenced, he came to consciousness of a growing weight within.

"The two were so happy together," he kept thinking. "I suppose I might feel the same if only Clara were

alive." And yet he knew that this was mockery. He knew that it was not true. "Love, love,—it is a thing not for working people," he said. "We have our animal affection during courtship. There is a period when kissing and all that is very sweet; but, as for real love as they know it,—well, a man who must be thinking all day how to get bread and butter for his family, and cowering all night for fear that he will not get it, how can there be any love for him? Love is an experience for gentle folk. It is not meant for us. But we do know a love for the children," he whispered, as he softly unlocked the door.

X.

AS the cares and duties of Monday came, Genevieve found herself thinking again and again of the little house on Goose Island.

"How stupid of me not to ask the man to come and tell me the result!" she kept repeating to herself. "Perhaps he will come, anyway, though I can hardly depend upon that. These people seem to feel so little responsibility in such acknowledgments." She grew almost restless as the evening advanced and there were no signs of her protégé. "I should like to know if Maynard really put the case as forcibly as I gave it," she was thinking. "I am sure that a big company like that can always give a man something to do if only they once take the notion."

By eight o'clock she had made up her mind to find out for herself whether or not her venture had prospered. She spoke to the police officer, who always stopped in to keep order among the children that came to the penny bank.

"Mr. Nugent," she asked, "does your beat take you on to Goose Island?"

"No, Miss Radcliffe, only to the river on Division Street. Why do you ask?"

"Because I want to go to see a man who lives just across the river on Division Street, and I thought I might go over with you."

"It's a lonely neighbourhood, that, at night, Miss Radcliffe. Many's the hold-up there has been on that bridge, and you can't trust them that live in the houses."

"But I know this man very well; and, if you could walk with me to his house, I could get him to return with me, I know," the girl insisted.

"Anything to accommodate you, Miss Radcliffe, though I'd advise you to wait until morning. I might come

back with you myself, only that the captain is a little particular. He does not like us to lose this hour from the beat, and that's the fact of the case."

"Well, I'll get my wraps, and go with you at once," said Genevieve, thinking what a risk it would be if the man were not at home, and she should have to come back alone. "I'll get Mr. Nugent to come back a block with me, and then I shall know the way so well I shall not be afraid alone," she said, overruling her fears. "I do just want to see whether Maynard got that place for me."

They set out into the night, she feeling quite safe in the escort of a policeman.

"It's a lonely-looking house, Miss Radcliffe," argued the patrolman, as they walked down the alley in the shadow of the great elevator.

Genevieve herself was beginning to quail. "Perhaps I'd better just ask, and come back with you across the bridge," she said, drawing closer to her protector.

John Wade himself came to the door in answer to their knock. He was in his shirt-sleeves, with the customary pipe in his mouth. Both Genevieve and the patrolman were reassured at the glowing gentleness of his face.

"Miss Radcliffe!" he said in astonishment. "I was thinking of coming over to tell you as soon as the work was done up." In reality, he had been thinking of it, but had timidly put it off, saying that she would be busy with other things and had probably forgotten all about him.

"I thank you for your escort, Mr. Nugent," said Genevieve, turning to the officer. "Mr. Wade will accompany me home. I want to inquire about the children."

"Well, keep a lookout as you come back," said the officer, looking at Wade. He seemed satisfied, however, with his scrutiny. "Good-night, Miss Radcliffe," he said, and was lost in the darkness of the alley.

Genevieve stepped into the house, determined to have a little talk with this man. Perhaps she would not have been so bold about entering if she had not noticed that the old woman was in the kitchen,— a thin, tottering old crone who she felt sure was in sad need of charity.

John Wade placed a chair for her, at the same time introducing the old woman. "It's a lady from Settlement House," he shouted. "She's deaf," he said in needless explanation to Genevieve.

The child Angeline came sidling up to her father, always keeping her eyes on the lady.

"Go and speak to Miss Radcliffe," he said fondly, his hand slipping down the side of her head and resting under her chin.

The child only drew closer to him, gripping his leg with one arm.

"Come and see me, Angeline," said Miss Radcliffe, coaxingly, resolved not to think of the sanitary side of the question.

The little girl came slowly over, and allowed herself to be lifted to her lap. Genevieve, in spite of her resolution not to look, noticed that the child's body was clean, though the same could not be said of her dress and apron.

"I'm a poor hand at washing their clothes," said the father, answering her glance and sending a blush to her face.

"It's no matter, if their bodies are clean," said Genevieve, in confusion.

"Oh, I'm English, and have had good training in that," said John Wade, proudly. "My mother was a country woman from the moors, and she was very strict with us children. She used to scrub me as a youngster till I was raw. How I did hate soap and water!" He laughed

gently at the memory of it. It presented to the refined city girl a glimpse of things that she had known only in old pictures, and it interested her so intensely that she almost forgot the closeness of the little room and the smell of housekeeping and of poverty.

"But it got me in good habits," the man went on. "I never think of letting a week go by without my bath, and oftener than that when I'm working. The men often laugh at me in the shop for stripping my shirt when I wash myself at quitting-time. I was brought up to it, I suppose. They smear over their necks and faces with a little water, and then do the rest with the towel. But I like a good scrub with the soap and a lather."

The ingenuousness of talking this way to a modern society woman! It was more than ever like the pictures, and Genevieve was artist enough to appreciate it.

"But it's hard to dry clothes here, when once they are washed," he went on, nodding toward a line behind the stove on which some garments were hanging, as they always are in the houses of the poor of the city. "The children, now, come out of the tub and are dry and bright in a minute; but the clothes hang over the stove till they are about as dirty with the coal smoke and dust as they were when I put them into the water."

"So your mother came from the moors," said Genevieve, going back to her pictures.

"Yes, and my father, too. My brothers and sisters were all born there. I was the only one born in the city, and my mother often said I was none the better for it. She always hated the city, did my mother, fighting with the dirt and the crowd. Besides, father took to drinking there; and she had little to be thankful for in coming."

The picture was growing before her.

"Did you have many brothers and sisters?" she asked.

"Two brothers and two sisters. I was the youngest of the family. There was Sarah, she was the oldest, having company when I was a shaver. I used to hang around the room until the beaux gave me twopence to clear out. They wouldn't give less than twopence when the girl they was courting was looking. Sarah was always good to me. She would laugh afterward when I told her about the twopence. She's dead now. Married the poorest of them all. She was out with one who was jealous, and began to spark another girl for spite. She accepted another man just to get even with the man she liked. He went off to America somewhere, and would not come to the wedding. Sarah was never herself after that, though she made a good wife to her husband. He was an old fellow with some money, and Jake threw it up at her that she took him for his fortune. She was too proud to tell him the truth, but she told me a long time after."

There was a silence after the little tragedy. The old woman was dozing in the corner behind the stove, and the child Angeline was looking steadily from the great blue eyes into her father's face. He had picked up the baby-boy in his talk and was fondling him in the usual fashion. Genevieve noticed how softly the baby fitted in the hollow of his arm.

"You must find it dull, listening all about my family," he said at length, by way of apology. "I haven't talked with any one for so long that I seem to go off on to all sorts of things, when I get some one to listen. It isn't often that I find any one who can understand."

"No, no: I like to listen," said Genevieve, earnestly. "I do truly; but it seems to me very warm in here. I think I will take off my coat."

"It will be real charity to stay a little while and talk,"

she said, to silence her propriety. "The man is hungry for sympathy."

"Just lay your things on the table. I have it warm on account of the children," he explained. "It's time this young fellow was undressing for bed. It's the hardest thing getting his clothes off, once he's asleep. The old woman there, Mrs. McLennan, likes the heat, too. Her coal's all out now, and I don't know when she'll get any more."

"Has she got any relatives?" asked Genevieve, pityingly.

"Not that I know of," said John Wade. "She don't say much. She had a son, but no one knows where he is. Perhaps he's done something, and is in the penitentiary. Nobody knows. Nobody comes to see her."

He walked over to the cupboard, the baby still under his arm, and began turning some milk into a bottle. The baby did not seem to incommode him in his actions or to consider this treatment in any way unusual. He lay like a roll of cloth, blinking as his eyes came toward the lamp. The bottle, once filled, was placed in a tin pail of hot water, and set on the stove hearth. Once seated, the father brought the baby back into the more natural position on his arm. The boy was nodding sleepily.

"I must get them to bed, and then I will go home with you," said John Wade. "Angeline, run and bring me the night-gowns."

The child slipped down from Miss Radcliffe's lap, where she was very much at home now, and ran into the room in the front part of the house. Soon she came back with the gowns,—not so white as Miss Radcliffe had been accustomed to, but doing very well under the circumstances. She hung them carefully over a chair to warm, and then came back to her seat on the lady's lap, serious and without uttering a word.

"I suppose that you came to ask how I made out with the Randall Electric," said the man, beginning to undress the child as naturally as if it were the most established convention of society to undress babies while ladies were making evening calls.

Genevieve had almost forgotten that that was her errand, but now all her interest returned. "Yes, what did the superintendent say?" she asked eagerly.

"He asked me a few questions first," said John Wade, pausing with the baby's dress off at one sleeve. "He wanted to know how long I had been out of work, what kind of machines I had run, and how much family I had, and about my debts and all. He seems a very nice man, though. I think he didn't have any real place for me."

The other sleeve came off here, and the baby dress was slipped down to the waist, leaving the fat, chubby arms to paddle about his face.

"He told me to wait for a time, and finally went with me into the yard where a lot of old castings were piled. 'Have you got a paint-pail for this man, George?' he said to the boss who came up. The boss said he guessed he could find one. 'Well, you give him a pail and set him to work in the morning,' he said. Then he turned to me, and said: 'Work begins at seven. I will have your pay made out for Saturday this week, though it's the rule to wait two weeks in the beginning, and then keep a week's deposit ahead. If you do well, there may be something better in time. That all depends upon you.'"

Here the night-gown was taken from the chair-back, and slipped over the baby's head. The dress and skirts were then drawn off underneath and thrown into the chair with the shoes and stockings. It was all done as easily and naturally as Mr. Neville would draw on a glove. The baby once lying in his father's arms, the bottle was

taken out of the pail of warm water and adjusted to the baby's mouth. The father then began rocking it back and forth with a crooning motion, his eyes fixed on the glow of the hearth.

"How much wages do you get?" asked Genevieve.

"He did not say," replied John Wade; "but I asked a fellow who was working near by how much he got, and he said a dollar and a quarter."

"It's a strange way to hire a man, and not have a bargain as to the wages," said Genevieve, who was not very familiar with factories.

"Oh, I'll get the regular wage,—whatever they pay the rest. I'll know Saturday. It was a great favour for him to take me on at all; and he never would have done it, had it not been for the word of your friend. I want you to thank him for me, Miss Radcliffe. I don't know how I can ever thank you," he said, putting his arms close around the baby.

"You shall not speak of thanks," said Genevieve, earnestly. "What I have done is no more than you would have done for me, had I been in your place and you in mine. Indeed, I think you would have done a great deal more," she added, remembering the help that in her brief experience she had known the poor to give to the poor. "If it had been I who had been out of work and money and you who had plenty, you would have taken me into your own house and made me share alike with you."

He looked amused at this, and after some reflection said: "I think it would depend on how long I had had plenty. If it had been only a short time, I might have done as you say; but, if I had been rich for long, I should do no more than you did. It is so easy to change."

He picked up his pipe from the stove hearth, and looked at it speculatively.

"Won't you please smoke?" said Genevieve. "I should not mind it in the least."

"Oh, no, not in the presence of a lady. It would not be proper," said John Wade.

"But you smoked in the presence of your wife," she argued.

The man laughed low and happily.

"You know what I mean," he said, his eyes looking pleadingly into hers.

"My father always smokes in the library in the evening, and I like to sit with him at the time."

"You are a true woman," said John Wade, taking up the pipe and putting it into his mouth. "Angeline, pet, run and fetch me my tobacco." The child ran, holding the little bag up eagerly. John Wade filled the pipe, lighted it, and puffed steadily, without so much as moving the baby.

"You will not find my tobacco so fragrant as your father's," he said. "I used to smoke good tobacco, but in these hard times I've had to come down to cheap stuff."

"I mean to get you a pipe and some tobacco for a present," she said impulsively.

"No, no. You must not spend your money on me any more," he said, drawing back slightly.

"But the money will mean nothing to me. I spend as much on a box of candy, and think nothing of it. Besides, I want you to let me help you in some little things. I want to make some things for Angeline and the baby. They have run down sadly in your hard luck, and they need a woman's hands at their garments. The old woman I do not need to ask if I may help."

"Yes, yes. Help her all you like; but as for us, and sewing things for the children, why, you are a lady," he said, all his objections summing themselves up in this.

"But I know how to cut and sew. I am not entirely useless," she replied proudly. "I mean to show you how well I can sew."

Again he looked at her amusedly, as he would look at a child. "Yes, you are different from most ladies," he said at length.

The child Angeline was nodding drowsily.

"Come, little girl, it's time you were in bed," the father said suddenly. He rose, carrying the sleeping baby toward the other room. "You must excuse me a moment," he said politely.

"Certainly," said Genevieve, as if she had been in a drawing-room.

He came back soon, and took up the little girl in his arms, her head snuggling in the hollow formed by his chin and shoulder. "Say good-night to the lady," he said fondly, taking up the night-gown as he spoke.

"Good-night," said Angeline, sleepily.

"I must stay with her till she's asleep," he explained. "It will only be for a minute, and then she won't move till morning; but young Joe, there, may wake up in the night, and demand a pull at his bottle." He left Genevieve alone with the old woman in the lowly, poor little room.

Mrs. McLennan made a move as if she was ready for recognition. She had not been actually asleep any of the time. Perhaps she had followed the conversation more closely than she had given evidence of.

"I am from the Highlands,—Scotch," she said in brisk tones. "He is from the Low country." She nodded in patronizing, superior fashion toward the door where John Wade had gone in.

"Have you been long in America?" asked Genevieve, sympathetically.

"Forty year, forty year," said the old woman, shaking her head. "And now I am left alone. I have no one in the world to look out for me except just him." Again she nodded toward the door. "He's very good," she went on. "He's very good to me, but of course these Lowlanders cannot understand. He does not know what I've been used to."

"Do you cook and eat in your own room?" asked Miss Radcliffe.

"Yes, deary, I do, when I have coal. He don't know what I like. But just now the times are so hard, I am out of coal, and he has plenty in the shed; but he says it is wasteful having two fires all the time. He's from the Low country."

"I'll send you some coal of your own to-morrow," said Genevieve, "and I will come and see what else you need as well."

The old woman nodded cautiously. "He's coming back, he's coming back! Not a word to him from the Low country, deary, the Low country." She settled back in her apathy behind the stove.

Genevieve was forming her plans. At last she had a family on her hands to help and be responsible for, just as she had intended long ago in her theorizing. She had been crowded out of all personal contact with the poor by this extravagant giving of the cold weather. She resolved there, as she had often done before in the last week, never to be guilty of such wholesale squandering again.

"Now I am ready to accompany you," said John Wade.

They put on their wraps for going out, the man's being a hat and some mittens. He turned his coat collar up, and fastened it with a long pin.

"You should have an overcoat," said Genevieve, thinking of an old one of her father's.

"Oh, I'm that strong I don't think of it," said John Wade.

Genevieve went to say good-night to Mrs. McLennan. "I will come to-morrow," she said.

The old woman nodded her head knowingly, but with mysterious glances toward the Low countryman. "Yes, yes, deary, good-night, good-night." She seemed to be hurrying them off.

"She is old and queer," said John Wade, "but she keeps some watch of the children. I hate to leave them, though, even with her, for the whole day. I think I'll get a small girl to come mind them, now I'm to be working."

"Why not bring them to the crèche?" asked Genevieve.

"What's that?"

"Why, at the Settlement we have a nursery for such children, whose parents are working. We have nurses to care for them all day, and little girls to play with them and amuse them. Then there is a kindergarten downstairs. Angeline is large enough to go to the kindergarten."

"But who pays for this?" asked John Wade.

"It is partially a charity," admitted Genevieve, "though the charge is fifteen cents a day or two children for twenty-five cents. The children are given four meals a day, breakfast in the morning after they come. Very many fairly well-to-do parents bring their children."

"But I go to work so early in the morning."

"So do other people. The nursery is open at six o'clock, and you can get the children as late as seven in the evening."

"I get off at six."

"Well, as soon after six as you like."

"It would be a comfort to know the children were in safe hands," said the man, thoughtfully. "That young Joe is a lively little chap; and I'm always afraid he'll get at the fire, though Angeline watches him like an old woman."

Genevieve went into further explanations about the crèche and kindergarten. "I will speak to the nurse about the two, and you need only give your name when you bring them in the morning. You can pay each night or by the week."

"Very well, I'll bring them around," said John Wade, pausing; for they had reached the Settlement gate. "You help me in everything," he said simply.

"Why not? Good-night now," said Genevieve, cheerily.

"Good-night," returned John Wade; and he watched her into the house.

XI.

THE next morning, immediately after breakfast, Genevieve went up to the nursery to see if the two young members of what she now thought of as "her family" had been left according to previous arrangement. Sure enough, there they were with the crowd of thirty others. The baby Joe had already become a favourite with the nurse-girls, and was quite at home in his surroundings. The girl Angeline was more backward, and was sitting sad-eyed in a corner; but, when Genevieve had called her by name and she saw who it was, she ran and threw herself into the beloved lady's arms with an affection that was pathetic in its genuineness.

Miss Radcliffe herself was scarcely less moved. The child had a way of getting close to people's hearts.

"You shall come with me, Angeline. You shall come with me up to my room, and stay till the kindergarten begins; and then I will go down with you and introduce you to Miss Mary."

"My papa has left me here for all day," said the child, slowly; "and I am to do just as Mrs. Belden says."

"But Mrs. Belden will let you go with me for an hour, won't you, Mrs. Belden?" asked Genevieve, turning to the matron.

The permission received, the child seemed satisfied, and rode away in the beautiful lady's arms.

"My papa said I was to be a good girl and not give any trouble to any one," she announced, still seriously.

Genevieve carried her up to her room, and sought to find her some playthings from the toilet table; but the child each time came back to her lap, and looked at her trustingly and lovingly with her great animal-like eyes.

"Are you quite warm?" asked Miss Radcliffe, kindly, making excuse to learn how she was clothed.

"I have on my best clothes," said the child.

"How fine you look! But your dress seems thin for winter."

"It is almost as thick as the other; and, then, it is cleaner, besides."

"Suppose we make you a new dress, and some new underclothing as well," suggested Genevieve, as if the thought had just struck her. "That will be like playing at house, and so we will get better acquainted."

"And you will play the mother, and I the little girl," said Angeline, entering into the spirit of the game.

"That's it; and play now that I will take your measurement."

A tape measure was produced, and the game begun at once. The measuring had been more a ruse to see how the child was dressed than the taking of the actual measurement. Genevieve found herself employing all the delicacy with this sober child of four that she would ordinarily use for a girl of ten. The condition of the child's wardrobe more than once brought the tears to her eyes, it was so scant and thin. The little cotton garments were clean as clumsy washing could make them; and they had been patched and mended after a man's fashion, with coloured thread, sewed in large stitches, and puckering the rents at the turns. The stockings were sadly the worse for wear. They would tear almost at the touch, and were darned to the last extremity. The shoes were completely worn out, and were patched over with coarse woollen cloth. This was even worse than Genevieve had feared. She sat thinking for some time, undecided. It would be an easy thing for her to purchase enough clothing ready made for both children. She could do it without stinting herself, as she had a generous income from her uncle, whose favourite she had always been. But could she do this thing?

She felt a delicacy now about giving to the poor that before she had never imagined. It seemed so coarse to send the children home comfortably dressed, it had so little in it of the personal service of right giving. And yet the children would be naked before the week was up. Indeed, when could the father get away from his work to make any purchases for them? At length Genevieve decided upon a middle course. She would get the material for the clothes, and make it up herself. Part of it she would do in the evening and in the father's presence. He would not feel the coarseness of the gift when he saw her in the pleasure of making it.

At nine o'clock she took Angeline by the hand, the two having become fast friends now, and led her down to the kindergarten. "She belongs to the nursery, Miss Mary," she explained, "and is to go back with the rest of the children. Now good-bye, dear," she said, stooping to kiss her on the cheek. "I shall not see you again until this evening."

Angeline slipped her soft clinging arms about the lady's neck. It was a new sensation, being loved in this childish way; and again the tears started to Genevieve's eyes.

"It was a good game," said the sober little maid. "Perhaps we can play at it again some time."

The children were being called to their places, and Genevieve went to her work for the morning. It had become almost a monotony now, this endlessness of harrowing stories,—no work, no food, no coal, the rent not paid, and the landlord complaining or threatening; and yet she had learned to be patient under it, to listen to the details of the stories, and to try to find out, if possible, some point at which advice could be put in wisely to keep the people from pauperism a little longer. There was only one hope ahead,—a vague hope of better times.

All spoke of it, all seemed to possess it; yet no one ventured to speculate on the reason for hoping. To-day Genevieve was sometimes less attentive than usual in her interest, and between cases there were decided periods of abstraction. A new tenderness was feeling its way into her heart. She was thinking of the soft childish arms around her neck, the gentle, trusting eyes, and the steady little voice that said: "It was a good game. Perhaps we can play it again some time."

She thought of the words again in the afternoon, as she was making her purchases in the city. When the soft, warm stuffs were unrolled on the counters before her, she thought of the scant garments to be replaced, all sewed and darned with the coloured thread in the clumsy, ignorant fashion. The tears started to her eyes so many times during the day that she felt almost as if she had a cold. "I am really growing sentimental," she said merrily as she walked; and then in the midst of the merriment the sentiment would stir again.

Having finished her shopping, she went direct to Goose Island to make the promised call on Mrs. McLennan. It was the first time that she had had leisure to look at the house, and she remarked its surroundings with interest. It was surely a bleak, desolate place. On one side, the huge overshadowing bulk of the elevator; on the other, a barren plain of waste land, used for a general dumping-ground. The melting snow had nearly all disappeared from the ground, leaving the yellow-white piles of lime, like the snows of hell, perhaps, that refused to dissolve with the heat. Piles of stone stuck out, too, as if they were obstinate ice; and over all hung the dull, heavy smoke, the sulphur of which added realism to the picture. Genevieve turned to the house for comfort, as it rested in its little fenced enclosure. But here there was

little more satisfaction. It seemed only to speak of the past, of people and habits that were dead,— all smothered out by the city. The gate swung dejectedly open on its hinges. The willow-tree looked like a dead tree that earthly decay would not pity. Genevieve shuddered at it all as she ran up the path to the door. She knocked on the front door this time: before, she had always gone to the back.

Mrs. McLennan was long in making herself known. Surely, she had not forgotten the promised visit. Indeed, she had been watching the approach of her visitor from the window. But either she was old and feeble or it was her whim to keep young people waiting.

“Oh, it’s you, is it, deary?” said the old Scotch-woman, at length, appearing at the door. “Come right in. This is not my room that you are going through. It belongs to him,” nodding toward the door of the kitchen where they had been the night before.

Genevieve looked around, feeling guilty of intrusion as she did so. There was little in the place to be seen. The window shutters were closed, but they were racked so much that they let in considerable light; and there were no curtains at the windows.

A bed was the principal article of furniture, the covers thrown back as they had been left in the morning,— old, scant covers, and not very clean in appearance. Evidently, everything of any value at all had gone to the pawnshop. There was a disused trundle-bed against the wall, some worn dresses of a woman tumbled into it. There were no chairs, no tables, no wardrobe. The very walls had been stripped of their ornaments, the dust marks still showing where the pictures had hung. The floor was bare save for a piece of old carpet. The ceiling was smoky and black. A newspaper was pasted over

the hole in the wall where the stove-pipe should enter the chimney.

This was all, and this was where an honest man lived, a willing man, who was frugal and thrifty; one, moreover, who was skilled and intelligent in his labor, who was well read and could talk with feeling. Here he lived with two children. He had come near dying here, perhaps. The girl moved on with indignation now drying up all her tears. "He shall know that I see all these things," she said to herself, "and he shall not be ashamed."

The old woman led the way into her own room, which opened off the first, and had formerly served as a bedroom. It, too, had little furnishing, but, serving as living-room, sleeping-room, and kitchen, was not so barren as the first. Mrs. McLennan had a rousing fire in her little stove. "I borrowed the coal of him. He won't be back until the night, and I like my own room best," she said sententiously.

Genevieve told her that she would order some coal so that she would not have to borrow, and then went to work to find out what groceries she should send, till the old woman was all aglow with pleasure.

"And now, to pay for this, I want you to do what I ask," said Genevieve, when it was over.

"I can do so little," said the old woman, fearful of the demand.

"You can do this easily enough," returned her visitor. "I want you to make Mr. Wade's bed. Make it up nice as you can, and then have a fire in the kitchen and supper ready at seven o'clock. Sweep the kitchen, too, and have the dishes washed up. He will be tired enough, coming home from his work. I mean to come with him this evening, and do some sewing for the children. You must have a good supper, too. I will send bread and

meat from the butcher's. If he has no tea or sugar, you can take some from what I send you. In fact, I think I may as well have some things sent to him, too. He has work now, and can pay for them all, though he has little time to buy."

Mrs. McLennan promised everything. She had "rheumatiz," she said, in her bones, but she could do for the lady, and everything should be ready by seven o'clock. Genevieve went home to rest and make ready for dinner before Wade should come for the children. She knew almost to the minute how long it took to make the trip from the Randall Electric Company's factories to Settlement House. Maynard Neville had travelled it often enough. It took just three-quarters of an hour, and work did not stop until six.

Promptly at a quarter to seven Genevieve was on hand, nor did she have long to wait for the workman's coming. She heard his heavy shoes on the stairs, and was just opening the sitting-room door to speak to him, when a little white figure sped noiselessly around the banisters and threw herself passionately into the man's arms. It was Angeline, who had been watching for him a good two hours.

"Poor little girl, poor little girl," he kept saying tenderly; and Genevieve stepped back into the shadow of the doorway.

A long, low, happy laugh rippled from the workman's lips. "Were you so lonesome," he said, "that you hug me so tight? Look up now, and tell me about the baby."

"Joe, papa's come," called out the child, shrilly. "Come, Joe, it's time to go home now." There was a scuffling sound in the hall, followed by the pattering of baby feet, then a joyful exclamation from the father and

shouts of baby laughter and chatter, followed by sounds of hugging and kissing. Genevieve was not four feet away.

She was suddenly sad now, and then was as suddenly light-hearted again. She ran hastily to her room for the basket of parcels that she had made ready for the night's work, and stopped only when she saw her hat and coat lying ready, where she had put them when she made her plan to accompany Wade and the children.

"I was a fool, an impertinent fool, to think I could crowd myself into their privacy. All day I have been pitying these three, but they are still richer than I."

She was down by the nursery door in time to meet them coming out, as she had intended. She was not dressed for going out, however; and this was not as she had intended.

"Is it you, Mr. Wade?" she said cheerfully. "I wish you would wait a minute. I have some parcels to give you." She came out in a moment from the sitting-room door. He was standing, with a child in each arm.

"I had intended going over with you for a call on Mrs. McLennan," she said, "but you seem to have such excellent company that I will not intrude. I have been getting some things for the children,—shoes and stockings and stuff for their clothing. I knew that you would not have time to get them; and I was in the store doing other things, so it was no trouble."

"I don't see how I'm going to carry all those things," he said, smiling. "They are 'most too much for my pockets."

"Perhaps I'd better go, after all," suggested Genevieve, eagerly. "I promised Mrs. McLennan I'd come, and Mr. Nugent agreed to call for me. You start on. I'll be with you in a minute, as soon as I get my coat and hat."

John Wade stood undecided in the hallway. In a moment she was back again, dressed for the street.

"It's not right for you to go out this way," he said. "Isn't there a boy or some one you could send?"

"Since I promised Mrs. McLennan, I think I'd better go myself," replied Genevieve, resolutely. "It's only four blocks, and the walk will do me good. Besides," she added, "I'd like to do a little work on the things for Angeline. I get so little time to do any sewing in the day."

Together they went out into the street, Genevieve carrying the parcels, which she had now dumped into a basket.

John Wade walked on without a word to say. In fact, he was not pleased with this sudden taking of possession. "Why should the woman come pottering along?" he thought. "It's kind of her, to be sure; but she overdoes her kindness." In reality, it was not her actions he objected to so much as the embarrassment in which it placed him. He thought of his poverty and neglect, of the cold, vacant house to which they were going, the dishes unwashed as he had left them in the morning, the floor not swept, the bed not made; for he knew that she would have to go through the front room, in order to see Mrs. McLennan. And then he thought of the children's clothing. If she was making more, she would see the miserable things that he had been patching and darning. Perhaps she had seen them already, and was coming because she pitied him. He blushed hot and red in the darkness.

Genevieve, too, was already regretting her rashness.

"How he wishes I were at home, where I belong, so that he might enjoy the evening with his children!" she thought. "Now I must stay and make them miserable

till nine o'clock, when Mr. Nugent promised to come for me. Perhaps he will be even later if he is interrupted on his beat. If I dared, I should go home alone without going into the house at all. How he must pity me for a sentimental charity-doler!" Then the humour of her embarrassment came to her. To think of her humility before this labourer,—she who could do as she chose, and depend on the world's calling it right simply because she did it; she who was to be her uncle's heiress, and to possess one of the finest old houses in America!

"You will find supper ready, I hope, and everything tidy. I was over to see Mrs. McLennan this afternoon, and I made her promise to have everything done. But I had hard work to persuade her to do it, for she scorns you for being a Lowlander."

"So you have been there already?" said Wade, in surprise, but relieved that the worst was over. "I suppose you found things in a pretty bad way in the house."

"No worse than could be expected under the circumstances."

They were at the door now, and good humour came back to the hungry man as they stepped into the little kitchen. Faithful enough, the old Scotch woman had done all that she promised. The table was spread, the teakettle was steaming on the stove, the food was warm in the oven.

"I couldn't find a teapot," she said to Genevieve, "but we can make the tea in this tin cup."

"Oh, let me make it in the pitcher," said Genevieve, "while you put the things on the table. You must sit right up, Mr. Wade. The rest of us have all had our suppers."

"I haven't had mine," said Mrs. McLennan, severely, interrupting.

"Oh, but you haven't laid a place," said Genevieve.

"I prefer to eat in my own room," said the old lady, with dignity. "A cup of tea is not a cup of tea unless taken in my own house."

Her look said that she scorned to eat with a Lowlander, but she did not utter the words. As soon as the meat was on the table, she tramped off to her own apartment.

"It smells good," said the man, sitting down; "but I don't remember leaving these things in my cupboard this morning."

"The Highland lass is your stewardess now. I insist that she earn what I pay her."

"Don't you want something, Angeline?" he asked, as he was about to begin.

"They have eaten already in the nursery," said Genevieve, busy with the tea and the pitcher.

"We had chicken," said Angeline.

"But I have corned beef and cabbage. How did you know what I wanted?" he asked, helping himself generously.

"Oh, all Englishmen like corned beef and cabbage," said Genevieve. "That's the only thing I know about the English."

He was watching her furtively to see if she noticed his rude table manners, but she was intent with the tea.

"Now it is ready," she said at length. "You can turn it when you like. I must be at the sewing, for I want to get some things done for Angeline to-night."

"I suppose you saw my sewing on their things," he said, half sullen again.

"If you did as well as you could, I see no reason to be ashamed of it," she returned with some spirit.

He went on with his meal in silence, but slowly it was dawning upon him that this girl had a mind of her own.

Differences

He had always disliked a woman with a mind, and now he was setting this up against her. Still, in his fairness, he was forced to admit that she spoke sense.

She was sitting with her back partially toward him, so that the light would fall over her shoulder; but it fell over her beautiful hair as well, and illumined the shapely head. Wade was not insensible to her womanly beauty. It soothed him, and made him think of his childhood. He used to be fond of pictures, and in England often spent a Sunday afternoon in the galleries. Now a picture was before him again,—the picture of a beautiful woman, the lamplight mellowing and enriching with untouched shadow the loose coils of her jet-black hair, heightening also, in contrast, the delicate outlines of her features and the rounded curves of ivory whiteness at the sides and back of her neck. She wore a waist of rich, warm yellowish-pink, her favorite colour always; and the lamplight rounded the folds of cloth lovingly, and sparkled in a tiny jewelled pin that caught up some lace at her shoulder. It was a long-forgotten experience to John Wade; and, as he looked, he wondered how all his coarse past was possible.

His supper ended, he pushed back his chair, and came to the fire.

“Run for the pipe, Angeline,” said Miss Radcliffe, smilingly. “Mrs. McLennan will soon return to clear away the dishes.”

The tired man sighed lazily as he settled himself down for a smoke.

“What a beautiful place a man’s home might be,” he thought dreamily, “and how comfortable to rest in after an honest day’s work!”

The glow of the conqueror was sweet in Genevieve’s breast; but she only said with interest: “How did you

find the work? Was it disagreeable to the hands of a skilled labourer?"

Wade warmed to the subject at once. "Oh, it was like heaven to me just to feel the hands doing something again. They gave me painting to do, and it is always a pleasure to do painting." He lifted the baby-boy to his knee, and puffed the smoke straight out before him. Angeline seemed to be fascinated by Genevieve to-night, or perhaps it was the new clothes that were holding her. She hovered about, watching the progress of the work with beaming, intelligent eyes.

"Tell me about the Randall Electric," said Genevieve. She was thinking of the places that Maynard must see every day.

The workingman began a rambling account of all he had noticed in the day. There was not a little humour in his narrative, a turn that was decidedly literary. His life had been so thoroughly grounded in the novels of Dickens, Captain Marryat, and Charles Reade that he had come to look at the world as through the novelist's eyes; and unconsciously, though in a crude way, his sentences formed in book phrasings.

Genevieve listened with interest. Mrs. McLennan had returned from her own room, and was washing and putting away the dishes.

"Make the things ready for breakfast, too," said the self-elected mistress of the house; and she gave a few directions as to what should be done.

"You work very fast to have so much done at the sewing already," said John Wade, looking at the garments she was holding up.

"Oh, I had a good start, to begin with," said Genevieve. "Mrs. Belden did the cutting and machine-sewing this afternoon. I am only doing the finishing."

Differences

"When they are done, Angeline must try them on," said the father, turning to her fondly.

"And that she can do at this minute," replied the seamstress, with alacrity. "Come here, child, and let us see if they will fit you."

With her own hands she unbuttoned and slipped off the child's thin dress and worn shirt,—the shirt that was darned and crossed with the clumsy black, puckering thread. The man seemed to have forgotten his shame of his own work in marvelling at the cleverness of this new. So intent were they all in the transformation that there was nothing of embarrassing false modesty as the child slipped all garments from off her, and stepped gleefully into the new union suit. Even grim old Mrs. McLennan stood smiling from her work at the table. Then there was the novelty of searching for the buttons and button-holes, of forcing the first stiffness out of them. Then came the petticoats and new stockings and shoes. What brave new shoes they were! The little girl was near exploding with excitement.

"She'll be for sleeping in them all," said the father. "I think I will hardly get those shoes off her to-night."

"I shall take them off, and put them under my pillow," said Angeline.

Genevieve was for putting on the old dress again. "We will make you a new one to-morrow," she said. "Mrs. Belden could not get to that to-day."

But the child was not willing to cover up the new things, and preferred to strut about and look at herself as she was.

"It will soon be bed-time, anyway," said Miss Radcliffe. "And now we will see what there is for Joe."

She had purchased ready-made things for him. The coarseness of giving had now all vanished. They had

only to admire the softness and the warmth of the knit garments, the father himself taking them from the paper parcels and slipping them on the yielding baby arms. There were more ecstasies and praises of shoes, there was more feeling and pricing of stockings.

Genevieve told frankly what every article had cost, and a look of dismay began to show itself in the poor man's face.

"I do not intend to let you pay for these things now," she explained. "I want you to take what money you have, and get some things for yourself to-morrow. You can get away to a store at the noon hour?"

"There is a store not far off," said Wade, doubtfully, and hesitated. Then he began again bluntly. "I see no place to be stopping," he said hopelessly. "You go on doing things for me, and I get deeper and deeper in your debt."

"I do not see the stopping-place, either," she replied, as she looked at him, smiling. "I mean to do a great many things for you yet, and I see no hope of your paying me. We will let it all go at present. To-morrow you will get the things for yourself."

He assented with the yielding good-nature that so fitted him.

Then she spoke more seriously. "As it seems to me now," she said, "we are destined to become very good friends. Let us not make haste about the evening-up process. Just now, it is true, you are my debtor; but let us trust in time and in the friendship. We have both of us many years to live yet; and who can say what will happen?"

He was silent for a time, as if looking backward instead of ahead.

As for Genevieve, she had all her romance to learn.

It was more natural for her to look ahead. She thought of Maynard Neville,—of how, perhaps, he might fall into some great danger, and be saved by this man whom she had befriended, “perhaps even at the sacrifice of his own life,” she said to herself. Then her glance fell upon the children, and she shuddered at the thought.

Both were startled from their reverie by a solid tramping on the path outside and a knock at the kitchen door.

“Why, it is Officer Nugent,” said Genevieve, suddenly. “Sure enough, it is half-past nine! I shall see you often, Mr. Wade; and sometimes you may like to attend some of our entertainments at the house. Occasionally I shall send things by the children. The new dress will be ready to-morrow; but I shall hardly need to trouble you again by coming over, except to see Mrs. McLennan.”

He tried to say that he had not been inconvenienced, all the time feeling that he was hardly making his gratitude understood.

“All ready, Mr. Nugent, and thank you very much. Good-night, Mr. Wade. Good-night, Angeline and Joe. Good-night, Mrs. McLennan. Don’t forget about the things that I told you.”

She was going out into the night; but a feeling of blessedness remained in the little room, like the perfume of flowers that have been shaken.

XII.

THE winter was looking toward spring, and a dull hope began to grow in sick, worn eyes. Even the most dejected were watching and listening for indications of better times.

To Genevieve Radcliffe the winter had been a revelation. She had never realized before what wealth of meaning there was in the world for those who were willing to step out into it. Before this she had been always learning rules. "This is the way people do," conventionality had been constantly saying to her in her home or in college or in church. Here things were changed. "This is the way people are," was what she found herself constantly facing now.

During the short winter she had come to know John Wade very well. She spent on an average perhaps two evenings in every week working at the brightening of his home. On one thing she secretly prided herself: the poverty smell had been completely scrubbed, aired, and driven from the house. Sometimes she went in the daytime when he was gone, and worked with Mrs. McLennan till the old Scotch woman grew quite jealous of her services to the Lowlander, and worked like a slave to keep even with her.

"Since I knew you," said John Wade one evening, watching her as she sat sewing, "I have grown to be a different man."

"It is your work that has done that," said Genevieve, smiling. "Any man degenerates without work."

"That's so, especially if he has to crawl on his knees before every surly fellow, begging for it. And, still, you have been good to me. I don't underrate the effect of that, either."

Differences

This time she made no comment, but smiled and went on with her sewing. A great deal of their most satisfactory companionship was when they were silent or listening to the babble of the playing children.

"That's what I like about a woman," John Wade would say to himself, "one that knows enough to keep still now and then. A man who has worked all day, as I have, wants a rest sometimes."

As he smoked, Wade liked to look about the room, and mark all the things this woman had done for him. There were the curtains that hung at the windows. They gave the place quite another appearance. They were of red print, too; and red was his favourite colour. It was like her to ask of him first. Miss Crawford would not have consulted him about the colour, but would have purchased those she thought most suitable.

After looking long and satisfyingly at the curtains, John Wade would let his eyes roam to the next point and the next. There was the cloth Genevieve had brought to spread on the table after the dishes were removed. That, too, had some bright colour in it. When he was eating, he had the table covered with a piece of white oilcloth. This had been his own purchase. He liked it, he explained, because his mother had always had her table so: it was easier to keep clean than linen, and looked more homelike to him.

"But, when the supper is cleared away, it looks so bare with the lamplight shining on it! Then we may have a cloth?" pleaded Genevieve.

"Oh, yes, then, certainly. That will make it look like a parlour. Besides, it is better to put your work on. The cloth is more befitting a lady."

Then there was the rug on the floor. It was so comfortable to have the children, with their playthings, talking

and keeping house there between them. The rug had been an old one in Genevieve's own nursery. There were patches and darns in it; but it was warm, and did very well for the children to play on.

After the rug were the pictures on the wall,—mostly simple prints and photographs. Some were taken from the art journals, and stuck up lightly with pins. Still, they were bright spots to look at, and relieved the dullness of the smoked plaster.

There were two easy-chairs, one for him and one for Mrs. McLennan. Genevieve preferred a little rocker which he had made by putting a back of carpeting on an old frame.

Wherever he looked, he saw the things she had given him. The overcoat that hung behind the stove had been an old one of her brother's. His slippers, too, she had brought from home. What matter if they were a bit worn and shabby? He liked better the things that did not cost her money. She spent too much as it was.

In one thing Genevieve had been extravagant,—a meerschaum pipe and several boxes of the best tobacco.

"I am particular about the tobacco I breathe," she explained.

John Wade held that pipe next in his affections to his children. The warmth of the gracefully rounded bowl was almost human, the long stem, with its clear amber tip, fitted so snugly to his teeth. And, then, the joy of watching it colour! It was like watching a rare flower develop from the mystery of the bud. Even Genevieve took an interest in the process.

"I must not smoke it too fast, and I must not smoke it too long at a time," John Wade would explain. "I once knew a man who had a meerschaum, and he ruined it inevitably in one night."

John Wade had a curious way of half misemploying words in his talk, the result, doubtless, of his novel-reading. Once he had used a long word so unintelligibly that Genevieve had only puzzled in wonder. The man laughed evenly and with good-nature. "You must always tell me when I don't go right, and you may laugh as much as you like."

She brought him a few books, that he might read when she was not there and he was tired of Mrs. McLennan.

"None of the new-fashioned American books," he told her. "I don't like American books. Bring me something I like. I don't feel like educating myself after a day's work is done. I just want company and rest."

She found that the books he liked were Scott's and the early classics of the century. She was surprised to learn that he knew Fielding and Smollett, as he in turn was surprised that she should know them, though his reasons were different from hers. He did not consider them proper books for a young lady to read; and, being urged on the point, he said so bluntly.

She told him she read them as a piece of historical study.

"There are many things in history you had better let alone," said John Wade; and she could not move him from his position.

"Of course, it's not proper for me to be dictating to such as you," he added; "but it's what I think."

She enjoyed getting his opinions and criticisms of the various books as he read them. He liked the translations from the French, grading from Balzac to the best of Zola. "Downfall" was a favourite book. That, and "Les Misérables" and the "Three Guardsmen," he had read over and over again.

"Hugo thinks it was all chance that the Duke of Wellington won at Waterloo," he said to her one night, "and

he sets his case very well ; but I can't agree with him in that."

Genevieve confessed that she had never followed the battle closely enough to be a judge.

" Oh, that's the best part of the book," he replied ; and immediately he set to work with books and cloth on the table to lay out the field of the great battle and explain to her the movements of the day. To facilitate matters, he used beans from the cupboard for armies ; and so familiarly and intelligently did he shift them that she became interested in military tactics, and argued and read to defeat him.

Sometimes, as he talked, Genevieve thought of the friends of her own station in life, and asked herself which ones among them conversed so rationally and with so much thought as this workingman. Maynard Neville was clever, but she had sometimes wondered if his cleverness were grounded on reflection. It seemed to her to lie more in the picturesqueness of his language. He appeared to talk best on subjects on which he had never thought at all. A certain healthiness of mind that comes with manual labor Genevieve had never experienced before. The men she had known were fickle and uncertain of their position ; but here was a man who accepted hard experience and early prejudice as first principles of the universe, and built his philosophy upon them. As for inducing him to doubt or shift his position, she might as well have tried to argue the sun into shifting its course in the heavens. And yet in a way she liked this steadiness of disposition, even when it bordered on stupidity. It was a comfort to know always where the man stood. Never did he give her the feeling that he might be here to-day and there to-morrow.

So the winter looked on toward the spring, and the two were growing together.

XIII.

THE spring was warming into summer before John Wade began to feel uneasy about Miss Radcliffe's visits to the little house on Goose Island. He had been so benumbed at first with his long poverty and endurance of cold and of hunger,—a cold and hunger that was not merely physical, but spiritual and intellectual as well, that, when the beautiful young girl had come into his life, he had looked upon her as an angel, not subject to the laws that govern human beings at all. But gradually, as he rose to better and more natural estate, doubts and questions came to him.

As for the girl herself, it seemed never once to have occurred to her that there was any possible impropriety in coming to sit with this man as often and as long as she chose. The enthusiasm of having a poor family on her hands had not yet died out from her sympathies. The spell of this man's loneliness, poverty, and helplessness was still upon her.

One evening Genevieve came over earlier than usual on some errand to Mrs. McLennan, though it was often her custom to walk home with the children as soon as dinner was over instead of waiting for the father to return from his work. In the mildness and light of the spring evenings it was pleasant for her to do so, and then she could go back alone before the darkness had gathered.

To-night the sky was very beautiful; and she remained outside, wandering about the desolate little yard, thinking sometimes of its past, sometimes of its possibilities in the future. Among other things, she had been investigating the little enclosure where once the old garden had been, poking sticks into the soil to learn its adaptability to

horticulture, and measuring the space, with the economic eye that she had acquired in charity-reading, as to where might be rows of potatoes and beds of vegetables.

John Wade had come in from his work by way of the alley and kitchen, and, though he had seen her with the children in the yard, had not walked round to speak to her, but had gone immediately into the house to his supper. It was his manner to do this, and Genevieve thought nothing of it. His supper ended, his slippers on in comfort, and his pipe all ready for lighting, he sauntered out for a little chat with Miss Radcliffe. How like the healthy, contented workman he seemed as he advanced toward her, a familiarity with fatigue evident in his gait, though there was no hint of exhaustion! His head was bare, the light wind playing with the fine, scant locks on his high brow. His coat was off, and the black sateen shirt was slightly open at the throat, showing the soft, veined skin as firm and delicate as the cheek of a boy. His sleeves were rolled up to the elbows, and the rounded, tapering arms set off the delicate beauty of his wrists. The working hands were none the less pleasing for the scars of toil on the fingers. As if to complete the brand of service, an anchor was printed on his arm in blue India ink. It was a small one and deftly drawn, showing that even in his acknowledgment of caste the author had a sense of refinement.

He came forward to where she stood, and leaned over the old picket fence, his eyes on the western sky.

"A pretty night," he said quietly.

Genevieve turned as well toward the sunset.

"Yes," she said, "see how the light catches in the dust and smoke."

His eyes signified their understanding. At length he drew a match from his pocket, and slowly scratched it

across the board of the picket. Young Joe left his play, and ran up to seize his father around the knee, shouting and hugging till he had attracted the attention of all of them, after which he hid his face in the rough cloth and refused to be drawn out by their coaxing.

"I have been speculating on your garden," said Genevieve, after watching the two for a time.

"It's of no use," he replied.

"Why?"

"'Cause things won't grow: too much gas hereabouts."

"There are old stalks of something out there."

"Oh, those! They are sunflowers. Sunflowers will grow anywhere."

"Have you tried other things? Potatoes, for instance?"

"I tried a few last year, but they wouldn't grow. Still, I'll try more this year, though, as I say, it will be of no use."

"Then why try?"

"Oh, that's what life is," he said good-humouredly,—
"trying things that are no use. At least, that's what a workingman's life is. The majority of us who are common men just go along trying without the hope of success."

"But still you try?"

"I like to tinker about here in the garden," said John Wade, coming back to the original subject and plainly shunning an argument. "I like putting the seeds in the ground, no matter if the young plants do die with two leaves on. I like to keep a few chickens, too; and I have bought a hen, now that I was able, and given her a nest full of eggs. She'll be coming off to-morrow. I fixed up a nest in the old shed, and we will have some nice fat poultry for Christmas.

"It'll be different from last Christmas, I guess," he

continued after a moment's reflection. "I'm getting to be more of a man now, and think of a bit of life yet before me. Yes, I like to tinker around. You will see me make lots of things this summer. It's a workingman's breeding, I suppose; but I like it better than music and poetry."

"Why are you always talking of a workingman as if he were entirely different from other people?" said Genevieve, warmly. "You seem to think that I and my friends, for example, move in another world."

"Why so you do," said John Wade, a trifle startled.

"I think you must admit that I understand and can move in your little world here," she argued.

"Why, yes, so you can and do," he said; "but that is because your world is the superior. Besides, you are an exception to your class."

"But show me that my world is superior. Show it to me in this one instance."

"You talk of art and literature," he said, "and use words like the writing in books."

"The words are simply those we are taught. You say things about literature with just as much meaning in them as I do."

Again his eyes showed assent. There was something of the pleasure of appreciation in his face which modesty turned to the appreciation of his tobacco.

"But I can't talk art," he said. "I don't know that."

"Neither can I talk mechanics," she replied. "But in your line I doubt not you know as much as I in mine."

"But my line, as you call it, is coarser."

"I will not wholly grant that. Besides, you do things in yours; and I only talk in mine."

His manner of smoking showed that he yielded the point lightly.

Differences

"I have convinced you," she laughed triumphantly.

"No, you haven't. The real statement of the case I have not made at all yet." He hesitated here, as if he would avoid her eyes and her questions.

"What is that?"

"It's too personal, and I don't like to say it."

"It was my fault that I made it personal. I called it our case for an example. Go on. What is the real difference between your class and mine? Between you and me, if I insist? Why am I your superior?"

"It's just this," he said fumblingly. "I tell you all about my life. You know my thoughts, and read me like a book. You know all about my money affairs, all my work, what I think of my children, what I did when I was a kid, my mother, my brothers and sisters; and, if there's anything you want to know, you ask. It is all right for you to ask. Don't think that I resent it."

She saw what he was coming to, but she did not interrupt or assist him.

"Well," he blurted out, "since you have insisted on knowing, you don't tell me anything about yourself. It is not proper that you should tell me. I don't know anything about your affairs, your childhood, or your folks, or anything. I haven't any right to know, because your world is superior. You talk to me of principles, but not of persons. You say things that are like philosophy in books, but I talk only of myself and those I know. You understand all my world, and keep your own to your class. My world is only an incident to you. You look into it, and it furnishes amusement. I don't mean to say that you are not sympathetic and sincere in what you do,—I'm getting all balled up in this,—but what I mean is that your world includes ours as a part; and that's the reason it's superior."

His confusion pressed like a rebuke upon her; and for some time they stood in silence, looking at the fading sky.

"I am not sure but you have spoken something of the truth," she said humbly; "and yet I think that what you accuse me of is merely a personal weakness, and not the weakness of any class. I admit that I have assumed a superiority, but you must not blame my friends for that. It is I who am the prig, and not they."

"Now see here, Miss Radcliffe, don't be calling yourself names," he laughed uneasily. "Just tell me if you ever saw one among all your friends who could come and talk to me in anything like the way you have done."

Genevieve had to think but a moment. "I don't know of one who could. I don't know of one who would not laugh at me for being queer if she knew that I did it. I confess that I have never dared tell them."

"It is a proof that I have won my point," he said, laughing easily again. "I have shown that your world is superior."

"But Mrs. Purcell — all our theories at the Settlement are that men are equal, so far as rank and class are concerned. Superiority is only a personal matter. It may appear in the slave as well as in the master. Why, history has shown us that. How often an artist or poet or philosopher has risen from the lower class!"

"That is the exception," said the man. "There are a few who know no class distinction. They may appear in the upper class as well as in the lower. But it is of the great majority I was speaking. They cannot cross the line of their birth."

"I don't believe it is birth at all," she said warmly. "I believe that, if you had been born the son of rich parents, you would have been as much of their class as you are now of the workingmen."

Differences

"Education, then, if you like. I don't believe much in the accident of birth, either, though a child does take from its parents,—we all know that."

"Yes. But the parents may be refined, even if they are in the lower class."

"Yes, I grant you all that."

"Then my world is not superior to yours; and it is I who have won my point," said the girl, gayly.

A troubled look swept across his face.

"The difference is there, though you have outwitted me in the argument," he said. "I am not clever at these things."

"The difference is in your prejudice," said Genevieve.

"It is in yours, too; and it must be so," said John Wade.

"But I declare it is not; and, surely, I know best what is in my own mind. I do not recognize any social distinction. Do I not deny all class distinction when I leave my own home, and come to the Settlement to live as I do?"

"No," said John Wade, stoutly, now seeing his ground, and determined to stand on it though he die for it, "you do not deny the difference by coming here. You recognize it instead."

"Don't I come to your house as one of your own class, as you say, might do?"

"No, you don't. Do you mean to say that you would come week after week as you do to visit a man of my age if I were of your own class? You wouldn't dream of calling on me once. And I,—could I receive in my own home a young woman who belonged to my class? Could I let her come and work for my children and play with them, as you do? Suppose a girl from the factory or one of your mother's maids should come and visit me here, and do all the things you have done: what would you

think of the girl, and what would you think of me for allowing it?"

There was another interval of silence. His pipe had gone out, and he was breathing fast.

"It is growing dark. I should have started home before this," said Genevieve.

"You do not think that I meant in any way to speak against all you have done?" he questioned humbly. "You know that you have saved life for me as well as for my children. I do not mean to imply" —

"I know, I know," she said hurriedly.

"I am very thankful for the difference of class," he said, "and I should never wish to evade it. It is the class difference that permits you to act as my friend."

"I shall be your friend still, Mr. Wade," she said, turning to him and putting out her hand in her old society fashion. "Now it is time to say good-night. It will be dark before I am started."

When she came in sight of Settlement House, she found Maynard Neville standing impatient on the steps.

"How ridiculously funny these people are," she thought with a laugh, her mind still on her argument with Wade, "and how odd that I should take them so seriously!" Then she ran up the steps, and thought no more of them till morning.

XIV.

IT may have been something in this personal conversation, it may have been that Genevieve was looking toward the summer at Niagara; she could hardly have given a reason to herself; but, at all events, she did not go to the little house on Goose Island alone again in the evening during her remaining month in the city.

There was nothing of awkwardness, however, between herself and Wade. She gave him to understand in a hundred little ways that she had not been offended at his frankness. On one evening she did go over for a long visit; but she took Hester Carr with her to show her, as she said, the picturesque place on the island. When she decided to go, and made up her mind to ask Miss Carr to accompany her, she wondered why she should not ask Bettine instead; but she had to acknowledge that there was something about the cheery Miss Crawford that she did not think John Wade would like. Notwithstanding all his feeling of social inferiority, there was a sturdy independence about Wade that she had noticed in but few of her equals. She had a vague feeling that, in the faintest way, Miss Crawford might be patronizing; and, though Genevieve knew that Wade would be polite and pretend not to notice, she was sure that it would rankle in his heart. In regard to Hester Carr, she had no such misgivings.

It was the usual hour, about sunset, when they started; and the smoky sky was filled with yellow light.

"I like Chicago, and dearly I like this island," said Hester, pausing on the bridge.

"Do you come here often?" asked Genevieve.

"Why, yes. I often walk across it. I have seen you at your little house one or two evenings."

"I thought the island belonged all to me," said Genevieve.

"Oh, no. It is mine, too. I like to stand here and look over the level of the docks, through the forest of masts. They are crowded in thick to-night."

"But the smell of the river is unendurable."

"It is not like a bed of violets; but look at the brown wall of that great block of iron there, the elevator. It's like the wall of a cañon. If the sky were only dewy at the top! How parched and gas-choked the sky is in this region!"

"A boat is coming," said Genevieve. "Come away. I can't endure the smell when the water is stirred up. What a disgrace this is to a city!"

"It is as good as the city, I suppose. It is a comfortable philosophy of mine to say that the world is always as good as people deserve. The people of Chicago are free. This is their own river, and they choose to have it as it is. They don't see the horrors of this sewer because they are foul themselves."

"They are not so foul as this," said Genevieve, with feeling. "The people who live near it can't help it; and the rich and well-to-do, who don't see it,—well, they know how terrible it is, but they forget because they don't see it constantly."

"Only twice a day, the most of them. But their foulness lies in the fact that they can forget. They are foul enough to go on in their selfishness."

"I don't see any good in calling names," said Genevieve.

"I don't see any good in running around the truth with your eyes shut," replied Hester.

And they walked on in silence to the little house.

"Perhaps Mr. Wade is eating supper," said Miss Radcliffe. "Suppose we go into the garden till he comes out."

"Let us first go into the house, and tell him that we have come," said Hester, stepping up to the kitchen door, and rapping on it smartly.

They could hear the rattle of knife and fork on a plate, and then the scurrying of children.

"Come in," said the voice of the master.

"Good evening, John Wade," said Hester, walking in boldly.

"Good evening, Hester Carr," said Wade, with a daring flash in his eye, half of humour at the boldness of his challenge. He looked more courteously toward Genevieve, though his eyes wore their amused look still. He did not rise from the table, but told the children to place chairs.

Genevieve sat down formally, as if she were a stranger in the house. She almost wished she had brought Bettine instead of Hester, even though she might have been patronizing. It annoyed her that this artist should seem more at home here than she herself.

"You should show more appreciation, John Wade," Hester went on gayly. "Here are two young ladies calling to see you, and you neither rise to greet us nor so much as offer us from your table."

"You wouldn't eat the things I have. It would be an insult for me to offer them," said the man, confusedly.

"Would it, then! I call that a slur on Mrs. McLennan's cooking, and I mean to tell her of it."

"I told the children to offer you chairs," said he, rallying in self-defence.

"But I want a chair at the table," she replied. "That water-cress looks particularly dainty." She was seating herself at the table opposite him.

"Have some bread and butter?" said Wade, pushing the cresses toward her.

"Thank you, and a spoonful of tea, if you have it.

You would hardly think I had just risen from the table. Are you going to join us, Genevieve?"

Genevieve was startled at the proposal.

"Yes, do, Miss Radcliffe," urged Wade. "I will place a cup for you at the end." He rose, and went to the cupboard for more cups and plates.

"Oh, he is finding his hospitality at last! I wondered when he would wake up," laughed Hester, merrily.

"You are enough to wake any man up, coming down on him the way you do."

"Bring the tea, too, and a pitcher of hot water," commanded the autocrat. "Now sit down, and be thankful that we let you sit without your coat and eat with your knife, if you want to."

Genevieve was feeling so out of place, seated at the bare, oilcloth-covered table, that she could hardly be suitably shocked at the wild girl's recklessness and daring. She expected to see the man sink through the floor in shame, but instead he looked straight into Hester's eyes.

"Isn't it proper to eat with your knife?" he asked simply.

"Why, no, it is not proper to put your knife into your mouth," said Hester, coolly, measuring out the tea. "I'm sure I don't know why all workingmen do it. The fork is a great deal more convenient."

"I suppose it is the way we are brought up," he said; "but I do believe the knife is more convenient. Why, everything would spill through the fork. How could I get any gravy?"

"You may get the gravy on your potato or put a small bit of bread on your plate to take it up."

"With my fingers?" he asked, to be teasing.

"With your fork, of course," she replied precisely.

"Well, I learned with my knife; and I shall stick to it, I think," said John Wade in his stubborn manner.

"So he says," commented Hester, turning to Genevieve; "but I bet he will practise with his fork from now on."

"You know too much for a woman," said the man, laughing guiltily, like a boy who has been found out in some trick. "Perhaps I ought to do it, so as to teach the children properly."

"Is there anything else I do wrong?" he asked after a pause. "I suppose there is nothing I do right."

"Well, gentlemen do not sit at table without a coat," said Miss Carr, deliberately. "But, on the whole, I think labouring men ought to be an exception to that rule. It is much more comfortable and sensible to go in shirt-sleeves, especially in warm weather."

"And you look a great deal better without a coat," urged Genevieve. "I always like to think of you so. The black shirts, too, are becoming, and almost take the place of a coat."

John Wade was pleased with the phrase, "I like to think of you so." It sounded on his inner hearing for days and days after she had gone. Was it possible that she should ever think of him, and find pleasure in it?

"Yes, the shirt-sleeves by all means," said Hester, in her clear, passionless voice. "And meanwhile, if I see anything else in your manners that ought to be changed, I shall tell you of it."

"You'll find me a dull scholar," laughed Wade.

"I might begin," she went on, "by objecting to your eating this bread. I hope you don't give it to the children?"

"It's white and light enough, isn't it?"

"Oh, yes: it's white with terra-alba and alum. At least, I don't know about the clay; but I am very sure of the alum. How can any one sell good bread at three

loaves for five cents? Look at this chaffy stuff! It chews like so much cloth."

"I know it isn't good," said Wade; "but I am trying to get my debts paid before winter."

"Well, you can get good bread of the German on the corner; and it will pay you in good health in the end."

They stopped, to get the exact description of the baker; and Hester promised to instruct Mrs. McLennan. The old lady came in as they were talking. It was her time for the evening work. She seemed much more active than when Genevieve had first known her, and was pleased at the company.

"Let us go out into the garden," said John Wade, rising.

"You and Genevieve may," said Miss Carr, employing the Christian name as if she were speaking to one who had a right to use it. "I'll come out by and by. Just now I'm going to help Mrs. McLennan with the tea things. I always think that, if I do that when I am young, some one may help me when I am old."

"The likes of you will never be washing dishes, lady," said the old woman, highly delighted with this attention. "You will be marrying to some bonnie gentleman who will have a house full of servants."

"May the Lord hurry the time!" said Hester, laughing. "At present I can hardly afford a respectable frock."

John Wade and the children and Genevieve went out to look at the garden.

"The first time she has ever been in the house," he said with a laugh as he was filling his pipe, "and you'd think she was my sister, and had made everything here herself."

"She is a clever girl," said Genevieve; "and you mustn't mind her peculiar, blunt ways."

"Oh, I don't mind her at all. I like to hear her talk so plain. She says what she thinks, does Miss Carr; and she thinks about things, too. But I shouldn't like to have to live with her," he said, after smoking for a time to get the pipe well lighted. "She talks too much. She would wear me out."

They walked around to look at the potatoes.

"It's little use," he said, stooping over the young plants and caressing the leaves with his firm fingers as if they were the curls on a child's head. "The gas here kills everything that grows. It will kill us in time, I suppose."

They walked across to the old picket fence, and stood looking out over the barren waste of land toward the western twilight.

"I am going away next week," said Genevieve, bluntly; "and I shall not come to see you again for a full three months."

"Are you going to leave Chicago?" he asked almost timidly.

"For the summer, yes: I always do." And then, remembering his accusation that she told nothing about herself, she went on: "I am going to Niagara Falls. I have an uncle who lives on the Canada side. He has a beautiful old mansion close in the sound of the fall. I always spend my summers there. I am his favourite niece; and, as he is a bachelor, he means to will the place to me when he dies."

John Wade did not make any answer; but she could see he was listening, and would remember. Suddenly a wave of sympathy and comradeship for this lonely man swept over her. He had so little in his life,—absolutely nothing outside the confines of this ugly yard. She was the only friend he had in the world.

"My father and mother and brother and sister join me there in August; and many other guests come, too, among them Mr. Neville, the gentleman I am to marry."

"He is the one who got me the work at the Randall Electric?" said Wade, interrogatively.

"Yes, you have seen him. Well, he will be there in August. In fact, he will come once a week during June and July, for he camps out and takes hunting trips in Canada all summer. He is a great hand for sports and summer hotels."

John Wade wanted to say something in his praise, but he could not think of a word.

"My brother is fond of sports, too; but he is a young fellow, and still has a year in college. He is conceited yet, but good-hearted in spite of his teasing."

"Is your sister like you?" asked the listener, manifesting the first interest he had been able to put into speech.

"Oh, no, she is taller and fair. You know she is older than I. Winifred is musical and clever. Oh, she is a favourite everywhere."

"And you don't care for such things as society?" There was something almost pleading in his voice.

"Very little. I have always worked with my father a good deal; have helped him in little things about the church."

"Oh, then your father is a clergyman?"

For the first time she realized what a starved companionship she had given to this man, and all the time she had been proud of the graciousness of her society.

"Why, he is pastor of the Clarendon Street Church. I supposed that some one had told you."

"Who was there to tell me?" he asked frankly, looking into her eyes.

"It is better that I should tell you myself, Mr. Wade,"

the girl replied, humbled into generosity. "And, now that I am going away, I am going to write to you this summer, for I don't want you to forget me while I am gone; and in return I want you to write to me. I shall need to know all about the children, and how you are getting on with the garden and the work and everything."

"You must give me your address," he said, feeling for his pencil and book.

She took the book, and wrote her name and address in it in a firm, fair, even hand.

"You have pretty writing," he said. "You will find my letters clumsy and sprawling. I am not used to writing letters."

"Don't you ever write back to your sister?"

"Oh, maybe, once in two years or so. I did write to her after the wife died, but since then I have been so poor I haven't had the heart. It never has been our way to write much."

He opened his waistcoat, and put the book carefully back in the inside pocket. The action gave Genevieve an opportunity to notice what a columnar body he had. It was sturdy and rugged, like the trunk of an oak, but with more than the oak's suppleness and freedom. She saw, too, that he was conscious of her glance.

"You must be a strong man, Mr. Wade," she said in reply to his appreciation.

His chest raised, and he squared himself proudly.

"Among the young lads of my set I've whipped many a one who outweighed and outmeasured me," he said with a laugh in his voice.

He stood with his feet well apart, his shoulders lifted, and head thrown back and saucily tipped on one side. A flash of remembered merriment was soft in his dark blue eyes, the knowledge of strength and power was quivering

in his delicate nostrils: only the student brow was calm and placid as ever with the light hair blowing caressingly back. For the first time Genevieve had a vague perception that this workingman was handsome, more comely, in a way, than Maynard Neville. This man was shaped by real struggles with the questions of life. He stood like a warrior from the field, with the calm and the tried strength of battle.

Hester Carr came running out of the house, her blown hair flying about her head and the lightness of a nymph in her motion. She picked up baby Joe as she ran, and did not stop until she stood close by the father. The baby reached out his fat, spreading hands, and made grasps to get hold of the pipe. The girl teased and taunted. The easy workingman turned his face away, but did not move so but that the baby palms should strike on his cheek and his neck. When the child blows came close to his eyes, he would blink, and pretend great pain from the onslaught.

Genevieve acknowledged the prettiness of the picture, and enjoyed it. At the same time she felt something that was more like jealousy than anything she had ever before experienced. Why should Miss Carr be so bold? She herself, who knew them so very well, had never played with the child in this way. She rarely held it, indeed, in the father's presence. The children loved her, she was sure of that; but they regarded her as the beautiful lady, who was only to be loved genteelly and with consideration. But they had accepted this visitor as one of their playmates the first time that she chanced in to see them.

There was no denying the beauty of Hester Carr, any more than there was the wine of her laughter. The cool evening wind was carrying her light hair about her face

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and swinging the folds of her dress. Hester was a child of the wind, and seemed most to bloom in its vigour. Most women are put out by the wind. It sets their laces and ribbons all awry, and wheels their stiff skirts about them in ugly, lumpish masses. Hester Carr was only beautified with the disorder. The folds of falling cloth gave themselves naturally to the air or clung to her slender form like the draperies on a Greek statue. Ribbons and laces with her only flagged themselves daintily in the motion. Her hair was leading them in gladness, and her eyes were sparkling with the freedom. The baby's arms waved like a windmill. The strong father laughed in his pleasure. Genevieve was certainly not with them.

"Let us look at the chickens," she said, and moved on in advance down the path. They followed noisily after her till they came to the little shed; and John Wade took the door down carefully, and set it away with its braces.

"I am afraid of the dogs and the rats," he explained. "Already we have lost three of the chickens." He crept in at the small door, and they could hear the old hen clucking and scolding at being roused so early in her sleep. Joe and Angeline were hysterical in their excitement as the father emerged with the hen, chickens, box, nest, and all under his arm and covered with his open waistcoat. The box was deposited on a chair, which Angeline brought with as much ceremony as if it had been for the queen's jewels. Then John Wade carefully lifted the hen, who was still clucking a comfortable remonstrance, as if she understood that she was in the hands of friends.

"Ain't they pretty?" he said. "There are only five now. The black one and two spotted ones are dead."

Hester Carr gave a scream of delight, and gathered the chicks in her lap.

"They are dear, dear, dear," she cried, as she fondled them. "How I long to be back in the country!"

The baby Joe was shrieking with delight; but Angeline took hold of Miss Radcliffe's hand, and said, in her sober fashion: "We buried the dead ones in the garden. The wicked rat did not eat them at all, but only sucked their blood."

"I heard the fracas, and came out. Otherwise he would have killed them all," said the father. "The old hen was frightened half to death, and was cackling alone in the corner."

He stood looking at Miss Carr's delight and smiling fondly at the baby. The hen was settling to sleep under his arm. With the palm of his free hand he was soothingly hooding her head, and her murmuring "cut-a-cut-a-cut" showed how she trusted him with her children. His pipe was still smoking serenely. It had gone with him into the shed, and came out with him, still peacefully smoking. The quiet, even draught seemed as simple as breathing to him, and faint little wreaths came from his lips.

"She's as pleased as the child," he said, nodding toward Hester Carr.

"There, John, give the dear things their mother," said the girl, placing the chicks gently in the nest. "Once I bought an incubator," she said, when he had put them all back, "and I started to raise chickens. It was all rational, scientific, and excellent; and yet I had no pleasure in those chickens. What a monotonous life it must have been, that sleeping and feeding and chirping! No anticipation of the beetles or worms that might be uncovered by the mother hen's scratching. No running at the cry of a hawk, no cuddling when they were loved or pecking when they were greedy. Wouldn't it have been

better to grow up in neglect, and to know the love of the mother hen? I was a girl of fourteen then, but never from that time to this have I been a good socialist. My father might argue and argue."

"Was your father a socialist, Hester?" asked John Wade, unconsciously employing the Christian name as he would with a girl from the factory.

"In a lonely, hermit fashion he was," replied Hester, without so much as noticing his form of addressing her. "My father was a curious man. He had been a physician in New York, and fashionable enough when he married my mother. But she died; and he was restless, and went West. His health required that he give up practice. So he took to teaming for a living, and was one of the best mule-drivers in the mountains."

"He is dead, then?" said John Wade, softly.

"Yes, he is dead. He fell off a precipice. The snow had drifted over, and he walked out beyond the edge without knowing. Perhaps his judgment was at fault from too much drinking. He used to drink heavily at times. It was like a disease with him, but he was never coarse or brutal."

"I used to drink, too," said John Wade, as if to console her.

"But you stopped in good season, John; and you will never begin again. You are a strong man. But with my father it was different. He began late, and it was done to keep up his strength; for he was always broken and nervous. You drank more from a motive of good fellowship."

"I have sometimes thought that, if I took to it again because of some great trouble or something, I could not stop a second time," he said, thinking.

"But you will never take to it, John Wade. Your days

of recklessness are over. Why, I would rely upon you as I would on the rock of ages." She put out her hand to him so frankly, and he clasped it with such natural humanity, that Genevieve was touched in her sympathy. She ceased feeling harsh toward the strange girl who could address workmen by their first names and allow them the same privilege with her.

The time had come to say good-night and good-bye.

"Miss Carr will take an interest in what you are doing," said Genevieve, extending her hand; "and I want you to answer my letters."

He promised bashfully, giving her hand a shoving shake that was awkward and yet not displeasing.

They made their adieus to the old Scotchwoman, who was sitting on the steps, and kissed the wistful faces of the children.

"I like your friend John Wade," said Miss Carr, as they walked home together. There was little else spoken on the way.

After watching the two girls around the great elevator, the man left alone on the island called the children to make ready for bed, and went on with his life as usual. Only, when the rest of his small household were long asleep, he went out again, and stood by the old picket fence, enjoying the quiet night air.

"I always like to think of you so. The black shirts, too, are becoming, and take the place of a coat."

They were words that were sweet in his memory.

XV.

JOHN WADE was very unwilling to think that he was learning to love, and yet gradually the idea was forcing itself to his notice. "An unnatural, villainous treachery," he would tell himself in his anger; and then he would put all thoughts from him, and try to keep only with his work, his cares and hopes for the children. Then, when his love was controlled, his conscience would not let him forget. "Was it right? Was it not the height of ingratitude to refuse to think of Miss Radcliffe, when she had done so much for him?"

"Why was it villainous treachery to think of the sweet-natured woman who had come as a friend to him, and asked him to remember her and write to her?" He replied, holding out with himself, that his guilt was the way he loved and remembered.

"I like to think of you so," were the words that John Wade best remembered. And, when he pictured her there in his house, how was it that most often he saw her? Was it giving to him and his children? Was it lifting him to higher things?

John Wade would ponder and ponder. "Yes," he would conclude at last, "it is because she lifts me to higher things. She teaches me cleanliness and neatness and health of body. She ennobles my mind, and gives me high aspirations, elevated lofty thoughts; and with that, alas! what is it else I see in the picture? It is the shape of her beautiful head, with the yellow lamplight caressing the lithe coils of hair. It is the curve of her ivory neck. It is the nimbleness of her active white fingers." The doubts had triumphed now; and once again John Wade was desponding, was cursing himself for an animal. Those things that in a gentleman would

have been regarded only as artistic appreciation were in him the most deadly sin.

In the habits of his daily life he was much affected by his image of her. "If my thoughts will not quite be in my control," he would say, "the body that contains them shall be as pure and as worthy as possible."

He had always been a man punctilious in his personal habits,—much more so than most of his class. Even in the days of his poverty and degradation he had taken pains with the washing of his scant linen, and had never dreamed it possible that a Sunday morning could go by without the bath that his mother had taught him was necessary. It was only in his clumsy housekeeping that he had allowed himself to be negligent, perhaps a little in the care of the children. It is so easy for a man to neglect this work which is properly the woman's, even a man of higher breeding than John Wade. But now the interest and hired attention of the old Scotch woman made these things easier for him. He still did the washing and ironing of the linen, he still kept all care of the children; but this was not irksome to him, being naturally domestic in his tastes and very fond of the children. It was a pleasure, almost, to do this, once he had finished a comfortable supper and had no care of the dishes.

But other things that he had not considered before were forcing themselves upon him now. In a little conversation with Miss Carr it came out one day, in some thoughtless fashion, that it was the custom of gentlemen to bathe every morning. Hester had used the expression of the "great unwashed," and he had asked what it meant. Perhaps she guessed the effect it might have upon him. It was her frank way to tell the truth, whatever might happen.

It might have seemed a little thing to any one else; but,

after listening to all that Miss Carr had said, John Wade went home with a firm resolution. "I am different enough in my ways," he said; "but I need not be different in that." His resolution was soon to take shape. He immediately began to clear the rubbish out of one of the little sheds, and to turn the building into a bath-room. "It will do very well for the summer, and perhaps I can have a little stove by the winter," he said as he worked far into the night. There was not so much to be done, for he had so little material. The sides and ceiling of the shed he papered carefully with newspapers, and drove in some nails on which to hang things. Then an old wooden chair was mended and set up. A piece of carpet was spread down to stand on. When three evenings' work had completed this, he went down to the corner grocery and purchased a new wash-tub. "It is only a dollar," he said; "and I can afford a little extravagance."

As time went on, he improved the simple arrangements by constructing a trough from the hydrant in the yard direct into the bath-house, and then there had to be a drain to the sewer. All of this served to take up his thoughts and to pass the time till he might look for the letter Genevieve had promised to write him.

He used to think of this promised letter all the way in coming from his work; and he came to yearn for its arrival. "Perhaps she has forgotten, after all," he would say, when he reached home and did not find it. Then the next evening he had the same yearning again.

With Genevieve the joy of getting out into the free air was so great that for the first few weeks she thought but little of the smoking city she had left behind or the people that dwelt therein. What constant pleasure there was in the freshness of cool, green leaves that had known the clean dew every morning! The clearness of the sky

had never been so welcome before. Even a gray day was refreshing, for the tints even then were born of pure water and sunlight. And, after a year in the slums, the transparent colouring of the sunsets seemed like a return to the freshness of childhood following the cares of maturity. Then the roar of falling water in the distance, the chirping of live things in the grass near by, the gentle response of springing turf,—here was the mother in Nature, and her welcome to men from their sinning.

If at any time Genevieve tired of these things, there were others to interest her. Her own little bay mare, Madge, was always ready for a gallop along the beech-shaded drives. Her uncle's dogs must have their share of attention. There was a goat. There were geese at the barn. The horses, the cattle, the sheep, all must renew their acquaintance. And the dear, precise, courteous Uncle George was always ready to give detailed histories of each animal for the past winter, and then to wander back to the pedigree, to make sure that his niece would not forget it when she should be mistress of Beechwood.

The protection, the rest and seclusion within the gray stone walls of the mansion, the freedom and hospitality of the great hall, the cosy chats and conferences in the retirement of the little stairway sitting-room,—Genevieve enjoyed these first six weeks by herself more than the merrier half of the summer with the guests. There was the sweetness of exclusive ownership, the seclusion that is company to the proprietor.

There were serious things to think about, too; for Maynard Neville was dissatisfied with his occupation, and was thinking of literary ventures.

"It is no place for a man of my tastes, Genevieve," he began one day. "This eternal monotony of a factory, —you don't know what a dog's life it is."

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"You will rise in time to the point where it will be more interesting, Maynard. I suppose it is necessary to do the drudgery in the beginning."

"I know; but I had that preached to me all through college, and now it is still going on. I suppose that, by the time I am old and not fit for anything but drudgery, I shall be told that I am free from it.

"Moreover," he went on, "I can't force myself to care for the interests of the firm, even when I am involved in them. It really doesn't make the slightest difference to me whether the Randall Electric furnishes the New Orleans Electric Railway with its dynamos or whether some other company does it. I don't take any intense delight in the fact that we can do it a few hundred dollars cheaper than some firm in St. Louis. Other fellows seem to; but I tell you, Genevieve, it is the Chicago craze for dollars. That's all it is. Now, if my college education has done me any good at all, it has shown me the idleness of this one thing."

Through quite a different process Genevieve had arrived at the same conclusion, but she remained discreetly silent.

"The thing that I think it is most important to do," Neville went on, "is to show people in this new Western city how to enjoy their money, to show them the value of culture and refinement." Then he went on to tell her of his plans and hopes.

"You know I have been chumming a good deal lately with Braidwood, the editor of the *Dilettante*."

"I wish you wouldn't, Maynard. I don't like Mr. Braidwood."

"Why, what harm can he do me? This is merely a business relation. I don't have to take pattern after him."

"It is his intellect that I object to," said Genevieve.

"I don't know anything about his actions, but he is so cynical and purposeless. The very name of the magazine betrays it."

"But I think a little cynicism is just what Chicago needs. It is too fresh; too raw, if you object to slang."

"I don't like Mr. Braidwood," said Genevieve, returning to first principles.

XVI.

SCARCELY had Neville taken his departure when Genevieve began thinking of the city, of the Settlement, and then of John Wade.

"What a shame that I have not written before!" she said with compunction. "I shall take my portfolio out to the hammock this very morning, and will not go for a ride on Madge until evening." It was as great a sacrifice as she could have made.

Once established under the cool shade of morning, it was hard to make a beginning.

"My dear Mr. Wade," she began; and this called up some pictures which set her dreaming. She seemed to see him standing by the old picket fence, looking into the smoky sunset. His hat was off. The wind was blowing his hair. The sturdy figure was poised in the easy attitude that seems to suggest resting from labour.

Then she seemed to see him again on the day he came to her a beggar. She remembered the restless shifting of his eyes, the sensitiveness of shame-mounting colour, the conscious hands that kept nervously twirling the old hat, and the deep voice that trembled with humiliation.

Then a moment when she had first been to see him; and he had followed her like a dog to the door, when she had turned and found him —

"Dear Mr. Wade," she wrote again, hurriedly now; and her tears were falling on the paper.

"How stupid of me to write that twice!" she said crossly, taking up the sheet and crumpling it. "I shall have to begin on another."

But she did not yet begin. She looked out across the green pastures, and listened to the roar of the fall.

"How hot and gaseous and sticky it must be there on

that filthy island ! ” she thought. “ I wonder if the children can stand it. I must write to Miss Carr to look after them. ” Then she fell to thinking of the children,—that jolly, rollicking baby Joe, that laughed from the eyes of his father, and the sweet, sober little maid, Angeline : she could feel her warm arms around her neck. How would they grow up ? she wondered. How fortunate that they had no children to play with in the alleys, teaching them evil ways and low talk, but lived off there all by themselves ! But in time they would mix with the others. “ No, I must see that that is avoided, ” said Genevieve ; “ and now I must begin on my letter. ”

“ Dear Mr. Wade, ”—she had decided to leave off the “ my ” as it sounded too formal,—“ You must be thinking that I have forgotten all about my intention of writing to you ; but, to tell the truth ”—“ Now did I intend to tell the truth in saying that I had been so busy ? That would be a regular society letter. ”

Another sheet was torn across and crumpled, and another formal beginning made.

“ I’ve been thinking about you this morning,—thinking of you and the children ; and it is just beginning to come over me how selfish I’ve been not to think of you before. It is not only you that I have forgotten : it is all of the people I have left in the city,—my own father and mother, my sister, my friends, almost, even, the man I promised to marry. Mr. Neville came to see me yesterday, and I hope brought me back to myself. It is all so beautiful up here, just like getting outdoors again after being shut up in a close room all winter and spring. I wish you could get away from that hateful Goose Island. I wish you and the children were up here in the country, somewhere, and you working at some good, healthy work, where you could be your own master. When I think of

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you all in the filth and smoke down there, hurrying and shouting and never stopping to look to those who have fallen, and then when I ride out along these roads and see the peace and the security of everything, I tell you I come to think that cities are all wrong someway; and it seems almost as if I were living a lie, when I go back and try to help perpetuate them.

"And yet I know, when I stop to think, that it is not systems that are wrong, but people. That's a pitiful thing to say, isn't it? And it seems harsh for a young woman to be saying it, but it's true. Don't you feel it yourself? If individuals were better, if you and I did what we could to help our fellows, would the system either of city or of country life matter so much?

"I don't know why I should talk with you about these things, but I always have talked with you frankly.

"Perhaps I ought to tell you something of my holiday here. It might give you a breath of air on Goose Island. Tell Angeline, then, that every morning I go out on a beautiful bay pony named Madge, who is every bit my own. Only this morning I am staying in to write this letter,—not indoors, you must know; for I am out in a hammock under some great beech-trees. Poor Angeline doesn't know, I'm afraid, what a beech-tree is. Take her to Lincoln Park next Sunday, and show her one, if you can find any. It won't be like one of my beeches, not so large by a third; but it may give her a little idea.

"Every day, when I am riding, I stop for some time by the great Horse-shoe Fall. There is a strange fascination about that. I cannot let a day go by without seeing the whirling water.

"My uncle is very much interested in everything that I do. He wants me to know all about the place that is to be my own when he is through with it. I pray that that

may not be for many years. It is mine now as much as I could possibly like. Anything that I happen to suggest is done at once.

“How I wish you could just go to the barn! We have so many chickens you would be an hour counting them. There are ducks, too, and geese and pigeons and guinea-fowls. There are even two surly old peacocks. Then we have eight horses and a herd of cows, and a big, big barn to shelter them all in, with hay in the mow and grain in the bins, enough to last them two or three years. I can’t begin to tell you of everything.

“When I think of how we have such plenty of all these good things of the world, and remember all the poor that I met last winter; and when I reflect that we do not work for our comforts, but live only to enjoy them, and all those who were working so hard get none of the comforts at all; and then, again, when I see that we are not superior to them in any of the natural attributes,—my friend, I feel so helpless in the midst of it, so much like a foolish young girl who has no hope of being wiser! I try to enter upon some little work, intending to be kind of heart; and then, when I find it all a mistake, when I go on spending the money that is given to me,—I have not worked for this money, but some one has produced it: money doesn’t grow like grass,—perhaps if it were traced back, these very poor people that I pretend to be helping are actually supporting me. There, you see how confused I am! I wonder if you will make anything out of this letter. I meant to tell you only of the country, to bring pleasant things into your life; and, as usual, I bring confusion and trouble to one who is already burdened.”

She stopped here, breathless, as if she had been speaking the jumbled sentences instead of writing them, and

wondered at what she had written. "I set out to tell the truth," she said wearily; "and see where it has brought me!

"I wonder if I should dare say these things to uncle. No, I'm sure I shouldn't. Nor to my father. And, as for Maynard, he would only tease me." She knew, too, that he would not understand; but she did not confess it.

John Wade,—would he understand? As she thought of it, she decided that he would not altogether. At least, he would not understand the economic side. The moral side he would understand, and he would appreciate her motives. To show his appreciation, he would never speak of them to her. She was thankful for that. It is the only return that is worthy of confidence,—absolute silence forever after. Genevieve did not generalise on the fact, but she was dimly conscious of it.

After musing some time in the hammock, she returned again to the letter; but there seemed to be nothing more to say. She looked at her watch. It was already time for lunch, and Uncle George delighted in punctuality.

"Give my love to the babies and to Mrs. McLennan," she wrote, "and think of me always as your sincere friend, Genevieve Radcliffe."

She sealed the letter then without reading it. A servant was starting for the village with letters as she reached the house. "Here, Dave, take this with the rest," she called to him, and then hurried in to make ready for the table.

XVII.

JOHN WADE had grown heart-sick with waiting. He knew that he had no right to become so. He cursed himself a hundred times a day for his presumption. Yet every day as he counted the hours till it should strike six he knew, in spite of his curses, that it was only in one hope that he was counting; and that was that perhaps, as he returned in the evening, Angeline would come running out with a letter that he had told her to keep when it should come.

Sometimes, when he had come home disappointed, he would think of all sorts of excuses. Perhaps she was not well, or perhaps she had met friends and gone somewhere else; but in that case she might have written. It seemed most probable to him, with his little knowledge of mail service, that the letter had been lost on the way or the carriers did not know of the house on Goose Island; though this could hardly be, either, since he saw them often in passing. Sometimes he thought of writing to her to inquire, and he would take out the little book and open it where her name and address were written in the firm, even hand. There was hardly need of the book to remind him of the place. Already he knew every bend of the letters as they traced out the names she had written. But it would be so presuming to write, especially if she had really forgotten; and perhaps she now wished to forget. Why should she care to remember this poor man she had smiled on in passing?

Now he was heart-sick and weary. If only Angeline would come running, carrying something for him.

Then one night she did come down dancing, and put the small square in his hand. There was the well-known firm writing, and this time it had traced his own name.

Never had his name seemed so pleasing before. He remembered how silly he had once been with the factory girls' simple love-letters, when he was a boy; and he was ashamed that he should feel the same now, and tried to be sensible and ordinary.

After supper he lighted his pipe leisurely, and sat for a time on the front step, holding the letter in his hand.

"You children must run and play now, while I read the letter; and, when I am ready, I will call you."

Angeline went off dutifully, and it seemed almost as if the baby understood. Then methodically the man opened the letter, and read it through to the end.

There was a start at the "Dear Mr. Wade." The form that seems so matter-of-fact to the sophisticated held something personal for him. It thrilled him, too, when she called him "my friend," and signed herself his friend at the bottom. But, as he read wonderingly and steadily, there came into his heart a strange sense of sorrow and confusion. This woman was writing to him as she had never spoken, and, with the joy it gave him, there was a deep grief at her trouble; for he could see at the very first reading that she was in trouble. She was thinking of serious things, and perhaps he himself was the cause. At all events, it was quite beyond him; and he could not help her. He was too ignorant and stupid. He saw plainly now that she was a good girl. He had seen it before, but only as a stranger might see it. Now he seemed to be looking at her with her own eyes, and she was trying and longing and praying. What a difficult knot and tangle of argument she was in! He would read it again by and by, and try to understand it. "And think of me always as your sincere friend, Genevieve Radcliffe." That was enough for him now.

The child Angeline got tired of waiting to be called, and shyly came to stand by her father.

"Come here, dear, and see what Miss Radcliffe writes to you. Bring Joe, too, so he can hear." Then he read to them all about the animals and the barn and the trees, and from his own poor knowledge of such things he tried to build on to the description till they saw a real fairyland.

"It must keep them busy buying hay," said Angeline, when he could think of nothing more.

"Why, child, they have hay on their own ground. It grows there. It is all grass there, like Lincoln Park. Don't you remember when Miss Mary took you there last spring?"

"Does the hay grow in Lincoln Park, too? I never saw any there in the grass."

"Why, child, hay is grass,—dried grass. Didn't you know that?"

"And are you going to take us to Lincoln Park next Sunday, as she says you must?"

"Why, yes, I suppose I must if she says so."

"Come and let us play Lincoln Park," said the child to baby Joe, after a moment's thinking. "We will get some wire for the trees and bushes. Next Sunday we will go to the real park." And the father was left to his thinking.

It took a great deal of thinking and a great many readings of the letter before John Wade was sure of what he was to say. The letter was quite worn with perusals. But always, as he reread it when work and supper were over, always he seemed to get something new from it,—a point he had not noticed before, a depth he had not fathomed. And yet he was not sure of his conclusions. "Anyway, I will wait a week," he said, "or she may think I was impatient." The week grew into two, and the third had begun before the appointed time came. It was Sunday afternoon when he sat down. The letter had been in his mind all the morning.

"Dear Miss Radcliffe," he began in his uneven, clumsy handwriting. How bold and forward the address seemed to be! "Dear Madam," he had decided, was too formal. "Dear Friend" he would not dare to write. Finally, he concluded that she knew best as to the form; and he employed the same, though with some doubt as to his right to use it.

Then he began thinking what he could say; and where her delay had only made her impulsive in the end, with him, who was much more conscious of his feelings, the reflection led only to a greater conservatism. At length he began in a workmanlike manner, and wrote on steadily to the end.

"I received your letter on Wednesday, that is now seventeen days ago. It found us all getting on well, and told us that you were the same.

"I took Angeline and the baby to Lincoln Park the Sunday after I got your letter, but we couldn't find the beech-trees. I asked two of the policemen, but none of them seemed to know. The children enjoyed the park very much, capering about like young lambs. They fed the elephant pop-corn, and it all cost us only fifteen cents. The conductor wouldn't take any fare for Angeline. I think we will go again next Sunday.

"You will be glad to hear of the good news that has come to me. I have been put to a machine at the factory, and now get two dollars and fifty cents a day. This happened soon after you went away,—the following Saturday, in fact.

"I see Miss Carr quite often. I stop at Settlement House for a chat or go over for a class in literature that she has Tuesday evenings. She is a curious girl. I wonder what will become of her. She is crazy to go to Europe and study.

"I have improved my place, too. The garden is all dying except the sunflowers. I knew it would, when I planted it. The chickens are all dead but two, and they are getting their feathers. I have made a bath-house out of the other shed. I papered it inside, and made a trough to run the water right into the tub. Now I can have a comfortable bath every morning, and the children are wild when I bathe them.

"Next week I will finish paying my back rent. It is an awful load lifted from my shoulders.

"It is no use for one so ignorant and dull as I am to be trying to explain to you about your money. What you say seems to me true, though I should never have thought of it by myself.

"I have read your letter a great many times, and I can't tell you a thing to do. If I were in your place, I should probably go on taking what I could get without any questions, and enjoying it. You can help the poor if you like, but most of the poor that are helped do not deserve it at all. The lazy ones beg, and the worthy ones starve in silence. Your money may come from the earnings of the labouring classes. I have always said it did myself. Not your money especially, I mean, but all of the money of the rich. As you say, money does not grow like grass. Somebody has got to work for it.

"I have wished that I could tell you something to do, but I can't. With me it is altogether simple and easy. I do my work, and earn my bread and my living. Sometimes I think I earn it three times over; but, if I can only get it, I am not one to complain. Before Christmas I mean to have paid you back all that you have given me.

"I must close now. The children send their love. Mrs. McLennan is well, but cranky sometimes.

"From yours respectfully,

"JOHN WADE."

He read the letter over twice, and corrected its punctuation and capitals as best he knew. It sounded so strange and stiff. He tried to think of something else to say or of some way to shape what he had said in better fashion; but it was of no use,—his invention was equal to no further demands.

If he could only write something worthy of her reading. But that was hopeless for him. He could never hope even to do it. A grayness and bleakness had settled down in his heart that he had not remembered before. Once he had thought that, if he could pay his debts, he would never feel sad again. Now he learned that there were other debts that he could not ever pay.

He folded his letter carefully, and methodically wrote out the direction, sealed it, and put on the stamp. Then he placed it with the letter he had tried to answer, and slipped them both into his pocket.

"It's like getting a day's work done," he said, laughing. "If it is badly done, it is my best. What is the use of fretting?"

He put on his hat and coat, and walked away to a post-box. It was a very good feeling, as he thought of it,—this knowledge of the thing done.

It was a very good feeling, too, to know that the two letters were touching each other in his pocket, his letter touching hers.

XVIII.

IT is one of the curious processes in the workings of the human mind that a conclusion long since reached may not become active until it has been put into speech, often through some chance conversation, and that ever after it may be a foundation principle on which the future is erected.

So it was with the economic ideas which Genevieve Radcliffe had expressed in her letter to John Wade. She knew before that she had long been dissatisfied with the doling out of charity which had engaged her during the winter. She knew also how impossible it was to go back to her old life of ease and society with anything like content. She had often lamented that there were no plans for the coming year, and wondered if her way was always to be so full of doubt and failure. But with these discouragements she had stopped, and said that she would not think of them until the summer vacation. And, now that the summer had come, it was so easy and restful to give herself up to the enjoyment of sky and trees and to put away all thought of the city and its problems.

Often during the winter she had thought that it was the giving of money not her own that made her charity so irksome; and, when she had given from her personal income, as she had to John Wade, she had remarked how different was the feeling. But even with this, though she hardly recognised it, she was not content. The denial of self was a distinct pleasure,—of that she had made sure; but with the denial there was a suggestion of the hypocrisy of denial, and sometimes she had asked herself whence came these goods she was denying herself. Did they really belong to her? There was one gift, indeed, that her conscience had never questioned: that was the

gift of service, the running of errands for people, the work in the house with Mrs. McLennan, and the sewing and mending for the children. That was an unalloyed pleasure, but it was the only one that had not led to self-questioning or ended in misgivings.

It is a truism that if we are to try to make the world better, we must first make sure of our own standing. If we would preach honesty to the world, we must ourselves be honest. He who says to the poor, "Work, and justify your right for existence," will, if he be honest, surely in time turn the question to himself, and ask: Do I work, as I advise them to? Do I produce, and justify my existence? This was the question which Genevieve had, half by accident, asked herself in writing to John Wade, and at the same time answered.

One evening not many days after the writing of the letter her uncle asked her to remain in the hall after the dinner was removed, as he wished to talk with her.

She knew at once that it was something of more than ordinary importance that he wished to say,—some business matter, no doubt. It was his way to make all official announcements in the dignity of their fitting surroundings. She brought down her embroidery from the sitting-room,—her uncle always liked ladies to embroider,—and sat smilingly waiting till the servant should remove the cloth from the table and retire to leave them alone.

"My dear niece," he began, when they were alone, "I think that the time has come when you should begin to know something about business. You know I am not one of those who think women should leave everything to their attorneys. I am perfectly willing that the attorney should undertake all the work. Indeed, it is quite proper as well that they should undertake most of the

worry,—they are paid for it, and it is their profession ; but still I am inclined to think that the master or mistress should direct, or at least she should intelligently ask for and understand their explanations concerning the management of her property. So I desire to instruct you from time to time in the securities of the small sum that is to be yours, so that you can give an intelligent hearing, though you may not care to enter into discussion.”

“I shall try not to be dull, uncle,” said Genevieve, smiling, as he liked. “But you must remember that I am only another woman.”

“My idea of the first lesson,” went on Mr. Radcliffe, blandly, “is to put you in charge of your own income. Heretofore the check has been sent you every month, and you have known no further of the matter. If there was a deficit in the income from certain stocks, my attorney was instructed to make it good from some other, and you would know no difference. Now, however, it has been my plan to turn immediately into your hands the investments that I have seen fit to devote to you ; and by knowing the fluctuations in value you may get some idea of depending on them, and in shrewdly looking ahead, to avoid difficulties. Perhaps you will decide to save and invest something of the interest, when you know what the principal is doing.

“It will all come easily enough at first. You need not be alarmed at complications,” he explained kindly, seeing that she was somewhat dismayed. “I have given you the simplest of problems. Your income is all from one source. It is in a transcontinental railway, and the payments are remarkably uniform. It is only that I wish you to have the documents in your own hands, and be responsible for their safe deposit.”

As he spoke, he took from his pocket a large envelope,

and drew out the beautifully stamped, authoritative-looking papers that were henceforth to furnish her with money. What kindly things they would have seemed to her a year ago, to just go on forever giving, without so much as a question!

Even now she looked at them pleasantly. "They are very pretty," she said.

"They are very pretty in more ways than one," said her uncle. "They are among the steadiest investments I have." He went on explaining their meaning and advantages. Genevieve listened with attention.

"I like your plan of making me acquainted with business," she said at length, "and I shall do my best to learn it this summer. You must make your lessons frequent.

"Doesn't it seem strange to you?" she added impulsively,— "doesn't it seem curiously strange that these papers should go on forever giving us money without our doing anything for it or without the papers doing anything, either?"

Mr. Radcliffe laughed good-humouredly. "Where is all your political economy, Genevieve?" he said. "Don't you know the value of capital?"

"Yes; but why should we have this capital? We did not earn it."

"No; but our grandfather did, and he has bequeathed it to us."

"But other people all around are working and earning, as our grandfather did, and yet are not getting these papers."

"Yes, because they will not save. Some people never know the value of saving."

"But they do save, Uncle George. They pinch, and save and save, and only get barely enough to keep them in their old age."

" Ah! but they don't invest properly."

" Oh, then it is in the investing, and not in the saving," said Genevieve.

" Well, I suppose it is that, though we usually put it the other way."

" But then they lose all the honour of self-denial."

" How is that? "

" We have these money-making papers because our grandfather spent wisely his earnings, not because he saved them."

" Precisely."

" But other people's grandfathers may have given to the poor or to the public institutions or to other great needs of their time, while our grandfather did none of those things."

" Yes, yes, I suppose you are right."

" Then why should we be proud of his expenditures, and call them only wise since they give us interest? "

" But they are a part of the great capital that makes the world go. Think of the commerce that has been opened up, the industries that have been created, furnishing food and employment for thousands of workers."

" The other grandfathers gave to the world's capital, too, when they shared their earnings with the needy or gave to public institutions; but they asked nothing in return for their children."

The bachelor was silent for a time: he may have been thinking of the cleverness of his niece. At length he spoke. " After all, my dear, we have these money-making papers, as you call them; and we must use them wisely as we can. They are a trust, and we cannot loose ourselves from their responsibility. Think of the usefulness of this great railroad and how many cities depend on it."

" If the trust is in any one's hands, it seems to me to

be in the hands of the men who manage the road, and not with one who knows nothing about it. Why, until to-night, I never knew my money came from there."

Mr. Radcliffe said nothing. He was thinking that these clever people are often unfortunately a little queer.

"Uncle George, last winter I found out a man who had been a brakeman on this same railroad. He had worked for it for more than twenty years; and then, because he was getting old in the service, they had turned him off, and left him to go on alone. Well, he had set up a little candy store, and lived on for some years, all the time getting lower and lower. He had never been used to the best; but hard times came on, and the man grew sick through want and exposure, and when we were sent to him he was far into consumption. He was in a hemorrhage the first time I went to see him. We had him sent to the poorhouse hospital. He is dead now. He died in the spring; but all the time he had been working for that road this money was being spent on me, who had done nothing. I seem to see that man's blood on those papers!"

"My dear girl, you pain and distress me exceedingly," said Mr. Radcliffe, hastily putting the papers out of sight. "The fact is you have quite overworked yourself this last winter in Chicago with all your philanthropic fads, and I must forbid your speaking further of them to-night. Why, you are positively morbid, my child,—positively hysterical and morbid. There, there, now! What can I do with a woman who cries? I have always thought you so remarkably sensible for a woman."

They spent the remainder of the evening in the brown and yellow sitting-room, reading. Mr. Radcliffe was very fond of the poems of Mr. Alexander Pope, and the penitent niece chose them as a peace-offering. She was humiliated with the outbreak that came from her. It

seemed hardly befitting a lady who was just coming into her property.

George Radcliffe, too, was unusually discomposed in his thoughts. "I wonder if I have made a mistake, after all, and have been letting my sentiments run away with my reason? Here is the first result of introducing a woman to business. But, then, young Robert is such a prig," he added, to console himself, "and Winifred has chosen the town house, and I have only my brother James's children."

XIX.

ALL the time she was looking forward to his letter. "I am sure there will be help in it," she said to herself. "I am sure that he will understand me and help me, he is so simple and straightforward in his reasoning. He is not encumbered with a great mass of ossified convention known as a university education."

But the days passed, and the letter did not come. Genevieve was determined not to show any further sentimentality with her uncle, and the very next evening said to him: "Let us go on with the business now. I will not trouble you with foolish theories. I was rather silly last night."

Mr. Radcliffe was relieved at this, and from time to time gave his niece such information and advice as he considered necessary to the wise handling of the property which he had put under her exclusive control. The small safe was soon entirely familiar to her; and, noticing that her own bonds were kept there, she herself suggested depositing them in the bank across the river. Upon her uncle's approval she transacted this small piece of business in so practical and matter-of-fact a way that Mr. Radcliffe quite forgot the uneasiness Genevieve's first outbreak had caused him.

In time Wade's letter came. She found it one morning on the tray in the hall. How her hopes fell, when she looked at it! It was so cheap and illiterate in appearance! "Miss Genevieve Radcliffe," read the superscription, in an awkward, cramped, spiderly hand. There was evidence of trying in vain to write in a straight line across the envelope. Toward the last the effort had been given up, and the letters had risen almost to the stamp.

The first "s" on the Miss was a long, old-fashioned

one. The paper was poor, thin stuff, an air of shabby poverty about it. Genevieve took the letter up hastily, and started away for the hammock. She wondered if her uncle had seen it, and if he would say anything about it. How unnatural for the moment all her life in Settlement House seemed, as she looked back upon it!

It was some time after she was seated before she opened the letter. When at length she did open the thin, carefully folded sheet, it was without any expectation that her problems would be solved.

"How could I have been so silly," she asked herself before beginning, "as to think that this man could solve my difficulties?" Then she read the poor letter through.

At first she was pained, almost shocked, at the childish poverty of the language. Surely, the man had not talked this way to her. What petty accuracy of the days! Why should he say that it was seventeen? More than two weeks would have been so much more elegant. "It found us getting on well, and told us you were doing the same." Why should he have written that? And then the ride to the park: "It cost only fifteen cents. The conductor wouldn't take anything for Angeline." Probably Wade had urged him to. But, as he went on, she became more interested and less critical; and at the end she was reading eagerly. The letter once finished, she laid it down in her lap, and, lying back in the hammock, looked up for a long time at the leaves and shifting clouds. In some strange way it had given her the peace she sought.

Then she seized the letter, and sat upright to read it again. It was only the part about herself that she read, and she was not thinking of the awkwardness of the writing. "Your money may come from the earnings of the labouring classes," she read. "I have always said it

did myself. Not your money especially, I mean, but all of the money of the rich. As you say, money does not grow like grass. Somebody has got to work for it." And here came the true message.

"I have wished that I could tell you something to do, but I can't. With me it is altogether simple and easy. I do my work, and earn my bread and living. Sometimes I think I earn it three times over; but, if I only can get it, I am not one to complain."

Poor, blundering, straightforward John Wade! He had given the help he despaired of. His own life was altogether simple and easy. Why should not Genevieve's be simple and easy as well?

"He did not mean it; but he has told me," said Genevieve, "that I must earn my own living, as he does, as all do that I have been professing to help."

For a long time she lay there quietly, thinking; and the white clouds were high overhead. She looked at them from time to time, at first seeing them dimly, through tears; but at length the clouds and the blue of the sky in which they floated grew clearer than she had ever seen them before. The great world was taking her back to natural things. It was the "peace that passeth understanding."

XX.

THEIR letters would pass oftener now. "Dear Mr. Wade," she wrote. "Your reply came to me yesterday. I had been expecting it for a long time, and was thankful enough to receive it. I suppose that I have only myself to blame, because it was I at first who delayed in writing to you. I mean to be more prompt in the future, and I want you to answer at once. I have a great deal to talk over with you, for I have still many things on which to decide. Your letter helped me more than I can tell, more than you can ever understand. I am going to explain now all about it. There is no one else I can tell here. There is no one who will try to comprehend.

"Since I wrote you, I have been getting more restless and restless. I was preparing for it all last winter, but lately I have seen that my life is quite unendurable. My uncle has been explaining all his business matters to me. I have seen where all my money has come from. At least, I have seen that it came with no effort on my part nor on the part of my grandfather before me. Beyond that point and where the effort lies I do not dare to conjecture. I wish that you may not misunderstand me in this. The money was honestly got,—every cent of it,—if honest means legally and fairly in methods of business. I know that the learning I have acquired explains to me how wealth can multiply of itself. I shall not argue with that. What I know better than all the learning is that which comes from my own conscience and from yours as you spoke it in your letter; and that is that, if I would justify my life in the world, I must give back the cost of its keeping. I must give this, too, with the work of my own hands or brain. I cannot be feeding from others.

"Dear Mr. Wade, I am going to work. I want to earn my own living. You must not discourage me in this, because all of my other friends will. I want one at least who will stand by me in this decision, who will understand what deep meaning it has to me. I know that I am breaking away from all of the traditions of my family. I know that my friends will think me crazy. But I want you to know why I do this thing, and I want you to tell me how to do it.

"I have been thinking of work in some factory. That seems to me the easiest way, and it is what I should most like to do. I want to be in touch with the great industrial system. I know that you will be opposed to this, but don't oppose it without offering some substitution. You see I am expecting you to be my staff, and my staff must not turn upon me.

"I have not yet announced these intentions to any of my family, nor shall I do so until everything is arranged. I know that they will oppose; and I do not mean to advance theories for their opposition, but shall give them practical facts instead. I have no idea as yet of throwing up my regular income. The money will go on growing just the same. I think I may spend it as wisely, at least, as would my brother.

"Now set your wits to working, and tell me something that I can do. You have seen so many at work, and will look from the practical standpoint.

"Give my love to Angeline and Joe, and remember that I am awaiting your counsel.

"Sincerely yours,

"GENEVIEVE RADCLIFFE."

He took his tone from her own.

“ Dear Miss Radcliffe,— I do not see how I have helped you. What I said was what every one knows. But, since you ask me to advise you, I will do the best that I can.

“ I want to beg you, first of all, not to think of working in a factory. The work is too close and confining. You have not been used to such a life, and would play out in a week. Then how could you get work, when so many experienced girls are out of employment and begging at the factory doors? Even if you got in through some influence, you would only have the satisfaction of knowing that you were keeping some poor girl out of a job, who could do it much better than you can.

“ I am opposed to women working, anyway. They have taken the work all away from the men as it is, and have cut wages down until a workingman can't live respectable, even when he is so lucky as to get a job. You will excuse my saying it; but I think that, if you want to work for a living, it would be much more reasonable and natural to learn to cook and keep house for your husband, and let him provide the living for both. That is the man's duty; and, if the women would only keep out of the market, he would be able to do it.

“ But there is work that you might do in case you don't want to marry yet. You can sew and are tidy with your fingers. Why don't you be a milliner or a dressmaker? That is more ladylike work, and would allow you to stay at home.

“ I can't think of any more now.

“ From yours respectfully,

“ JOHN WADE.”

“ Dear Mr. Wade,— I have thought over all you have said about the factory, but I can hardly be of your opinion.

If the work is close and confining, why should I not endure it as well as the other young women? I know that I am but entering employment where there are already more workers than places; and yet can you find me the place where that is not true? It is a situation that holds in all the field of work, be it manual, professional, or artistic. The trouble is not that there are too many workers, but that the work is not evenly distributed. We ought all of us to work shorter days, each doing his share. And, as for the work itself, there is an unlimited supply. There are always plenty of useful and beautiful things to be done. The trouble, again, is that a few people control the labour market, and will not let the work be done unless they can get profit out of it. They demand so large a profit, moreover, that the labour market is always glutted. They need the profit, as I know, to keep up their luxuries and extravagances, morally and industrially diseased and morbid as they are because they have no healthy work of their own. You see I have been thinking of these things lately, and you will find it difficult to put me down. You cannot preach to me that things are made better by letting them alone. I know that they are made better by earnest people going into them, and making them their own personal interest.

“Nor am I willing to go into the dressmaking and millinery that you admire. The first, I think, should be much improved and modernized in its methods. The second I think absolutely foolish and wicked. It seems to me nothing short of a sin to encourage the horrible creations that women wear on their heads.

“Besides, I do not want to work alone. I am longing to join the ranks of the great industrial army of the world, and I am willing to stand as a private. How shall I begin if I wish to get employment in a factory? I do not

wish to get in through influential friends. I wish to stand on my own merits.

“Good-bye now,

“GENEVIEVE RADCLIFFE.”

“My dear Miss Radcliffe,— You have no right to throw away all of your life in toil and weariness, when there are so many things that you can do. It is not because I say it; but it is true, and you know it is true, that you are not a woman of ordinary ability. You have a good education, and a way that will carry lots of power. Now most girls can do nothing better than work at what they are told, but you should be in a place to direct. I do not know that you could manage a great business, but I am positive as anything that you could do more intelligent labour than tend a machine.

“You have no right to throw yourself away. If we lived in your ideal time of a few hours’ work for everybody, it would be very well for you to drudge; but factory work now means nine hours a day for six days in the week, and fifty-two weeks in the year.

“I have been thinking a great deal about you. Why don’t you take up teaching? That is good work, and I have heard you say often that both the teachers and methods are very bad. Why don’t you go in for making them better? It is an important question, teaching the children. I feel it more and more, when I think of my own. What a burden would be lifted from my shoulders if I knew that I was putting them into such hands as yours instead of the women that I see! Here, at least, if you crowd some poor worker out, you may know that you put in a better.

“The hot weather here is terrible. The children send you their love.

“From yours sincerely,

“JOHN WADE.”

"My dear Mr. Wade,— Always you are helping me. Always you are the wise counsellor who does not oppose, but skilfully directs my action. Your letters have been so different of late,— such vigorous, helpful letters.

"You have opened a fruitful field to me with your suggestion about teaching. Perhaps I was mistaken about the factory work. Perhaps I was something wrong in my eagerness, and overlooked real differences between myself and the factory girls in trying to demolish the false differences. It will avoid great opposition, too, from my family, which, when I come to think soberly of it, I see should have weighty consideration. I think now that my plan is fully formed, and I am sure that you will approve of it.

"I shall begin by learning sloyd and manual training, with the avowed intention of teaching. My plea for this will be the need of reform in educational matters, and my own desire to advance it. I shall tell my friends of my conviction that every woman should earn her own living; but, since I am going into work that is recognised as more ladylike, I shall not be considered quite hopeless. I have talked already with you about my belief in manual training in the public schools of cities, and you know that I shall undertake this work conscientiously. It seems strange to me now that I had not thought of it before.

"I have had such a struggle this summer. I feel full ten years older, and only six weeks are gone; and no one has known anything about it.

"To-morrow the guests begin to come, my father and mother and brother and sister along with the rest. And I shall be merry and light-hearted with them, and shall tell them quietly of my plans for the winter. In six weeks more I shall return to smoking Chicago, and then shall see you again; and, please, we will go on as before, as if I had not been confidential.

"I have been so taken up with myself, and have dragged you along with me, that we have left off all talk about the children and about Miss Carr and everybody and everything. Suppose you write me once more, if you are not too weary of writing, and tell me about them all and about yourself.

"I, too, will write you if I can, and give you some account of our guests.

"Ever most gratefully yours,

"GENEVIEVE RADCLIFFE."

XXI.

THE meeting when Genevieve had returned to the city was ordinary and commonplace enough. Each of them was a little disappointed in the other. She was only a lady as he looked at her, and he was but a workingman to her. There were doubtless hundreds of others. So extravagant are the dreams of the absent.

Miss Radcliffe was overseeing the establishment of her trunks in Settlement House, and John Wade came in for the children. She was standing in the institutional hall, but back in the shadow, so that he did not see her till he was half-way up the stairs.

"How do you do, Mr. Wade?" she called to him. His heart seemed to stop for an instant, then to begin violently beating again, sending the blood to his head till he was dizzy and almost gasping. His face was a flame of colour; but, when he turned awkwardly and came down to where she could see him, he was quite as natural as usual, possibly a little more clumsy.

Genevieve held out her hand. "I am just in the midst of my moving," she said. "I was going to inquire for you as soon as I was settled."

"I was coming for the children," he replied. "I am just away from the factory."

She asked about the children; and he was telling her something about them, when the expressman called her to see about the trunks. When she came down again, the children were ready for the street. They were just on the point of departure. Baby Joe shouted at once on seeing her, and ran to be taken into her arms. She lifted him up with a jump, and planted a kiss on his lips. What father would not have been pleased? Angeline was

more timid than her brother, and needed a little wheedling.

"How thin she is, and how pale!" said Genevieve, with a pang of self-reproach. "She does not look well, Mr. Wade."

"The weather has been something terrible," replied John, shifting his position. "The heat was so great in that little box house that we could not endure to go inside sometimes, maybe all night. The afternoon sun seemed to reflect back from the iron sides of that big elevator."

"Did you sleep out of doors?" asked Genevieve.

"We had to, in order to breathe. I suppose that gas and the smell from the river are not very good things to sleep in. We've got to get out of that place. By spring I will have all of my debts paid if I keep work, and I can't stand that hole another summer."

"She ought to have a week in the country," said Miss Radcliffe, thinking how she might arrange it.

"She would cry her eyes out if she was away from me for the night. I believe she would be worse off than here."

At the very mention of being sent away from her father, Angeline crept close behind him, and slipped her hand into his own.

Genevieve saw how impossible it was, and did not urge her plan further.

"Well, I will try to see you again soon, maybe tomorrow," she said. "Just now I suppose you are hungry for supper. How has Mrs. McLennan stood the summer?"

"Very well, only a little cranky," said John Wade. "Perhaps you and Hester will come over and see us, when she gets back. She went for two weeks to Kankakee. She will be coming back now in a few days."

"I am sure we can come, but I will try to see you even before then. I want to talk with you about the children. Perhaps you can come here for some evening."

John Wade promised. He seemed relieved to find that she was not coming to see him alone, as had formerly been the custom. There was something sullen in his manner to-night: he felt it, and hated himself for it. Nor did Genevieve quite understand. But she said good-night, and was busy with other things.

In fact, her time was so occupied with getting established for the year, in making her arrangements for lessons at the training school, and in puzzling over theories of education, that there was little left during the first days to be given to people at all. Moreover, there were her last year's duties to remember, and to put into the hands of another. Poor Miss Crawford was left bemoaning her fate that she must go on with investigating, relieving, and advising. She begged that Genevieve would help just a little, would take charge of a few easy cases. But the new convert was always firm to her conversion. No, she would have no more of doling charity now. Let those who did not work for their living turn in and help, if their consciences pricked them. When the four days were up, Hester Carr came back into the house with the breeziness of a country whirlwind. The police officer, Mr. Nugent, was as merry as a piper. Everywhere were whistling, laughter, and jokes. Everybody was glad to see Miss Hester. One would think she had been gone for the summer. That was Thursday. On the next evening Hester came up to Genevieve with a business-like air that meant decision.

"Let us go and see our friend John Wade," she said. "Of late I think he has been getting lonesome."

The visit was one that Genevieve herself had been try-

ing to propose, but had felt a bit timid about doing so. She hardly knew why it should be so, unless she was impressed by Miss Carr.

They found him sitting on the step, looking at the great elevator.

"Why don't you turn your face the other way? There is still some light in the sunset," laughed Hester, after their greeting.

"The light is fading," he replied, "and the darkness is coming from the east. That old elevator looms up there like some huge goblin. Sometimes I think it represents fate, it is always so grim and immovable."

Genevieve could see that his thoughts and his manner of speaking had changed in the three months she had been absent. It was due to the companionship of Hester Carr.

Nothing was said by the two. He was getting chairs for the ladies; but Hester refused hers as usual, and sat beside him on the step. He liked the acknowledgment before Miss Radcliffe, but he did not show that he liked it.

"I was thinking of Angeline when you came," he resumed after puffing at his pipe. "She isn't quite healthy, I'm afraid."

"Couldn't you get a week off at the factory, and take her into the country?" asked Genevieve.

"I daren't ask," he answered, as if he had already considered. "They would never take me back, I'm afraid. There is talk now of shutting down some of the machines, and I should be among the first to go anyway then, for the other men are old in the employ of the company, and the rule is to keep the oldest men last."

"Let's arrange a day in the country for Sunday," said Hester, impulsively, "with Mrs. McLennan and everybody. We will go to Glencoe. That is a beautiful place, just real fields and pastures and woods. We'll take dinner

and supper, too, if you like, and books, and everything, and have a regular family picnic."

There was something taking in the proposal; and they agreed upon it, and began discussing the preparations. At first Genevieve thought that she ought not to go, as it was the custom to go home for Sunday; but she argued that she had just been six weeks with her parents, and she could easily write them. Besides, Hester Carr's enthusiasm of anticipation was something very hard to withstand. They went in to secure the good will of Mrs. McLennan, and made announcements to the dancing children. The old Scotchwoman grumblingly consented to go, after bringing up all the objections she could think of, such as rheumatism, no shoes suitable for the country, no bonnet good enough for Sunday, not time to get the dinner ready, and various other half-mentioned obstructions. But each time Hester would have her own way. Take a bottle of liniment along for the rheumatism, sew up the old shoes that she had. Even now the brilliant young lady was preparing a needle and thread, and going at the shoes with her own hands.

"Come, Genevieve, can't you fix up that bonnet? All it needs is to wash the ribbon in cold coffee. Have you got any cold coffee, John? Now what shall we have for our dinner?"

"Hester is a great one for having her own way," laughed John Wade, walking about with the baby under one arm.

Later in the evening, when the children had been put to bed, they went again into the garden. The stench that rose from the river, mingled with the coal gas and fumes from the factories, made the night heavy and oppressive.

"How horrible it is!" said Genevieve, shuddering with the contact.

"Oh, it's roses and violets compared with what it was in the summer," laughed John Wade. "It was all this warmed up to boiling-point when the heat rolled out from that old iron block of an elevator."

"You should have moved from this place in the spring. I had no idea it was like this."

"I couldn't move very well. I hadn't the money to do it. Besides, the landlord here has trusted me and done me many a favour; and he needs some one here who will look after his property. If this house was once deserted, the boys would find it out in a week; and it wouldn't be fit to stable horses in after they had been at it a few times."

"It's hardly that now, I should say," said Hester, drily.

"Oh, it's not such a bad house for the money; and I like to be a little secluded. Any other place, I should have to live with some one else in the house; and I never can abide that,—old women always quarrelling and meddling."

"Then the children do not come under the influence of the alley children," added Genevieve.

"Still, I'm going to move in the spring. I'm going to move, sure, if I'm working. But what is the use to look ahead? I may be fired any Saturday. I'm getting so that I hate to go up for my money any more, glad as I am to get it. It always seems as if the superintendent is going to say: 'I guess you needn't come any more, John: I'm sorry, but we've got to turn some off.' He's a nice man is the superintendent."

"I'll speak to him myself, and see that you are not discharged," said Genevieve. "Why should you be if you have given satisfaction?"

"No, no: you must not do that. I should be ashamed to look anybody there in the face if I knew I was staying

in on a pull. If they shut down some of the machines and turn off a number of men, it's right that the new man should be the first to go. That's expected, and it's what all the men expect. No, it was humiliating enough to accept a place that was made for me; but, now that I've worked up and got acquainted there, I could never stay on when the old hands were going. I'd rather starve first. I'd rather go back to what I was last winter."

"You'll never do that while I have any money," said Genevieve, warmly.

Hester Carr blazed out like a bonfire.

"What cursed civilization is this! What hell-like conditions of labour, when the men who are most willing and capable are forced to be fed by the idle!"

"Miss Radcliffe is not the idle," said John Wade, indignantly. "She is going to earn her own living."

"But the money I should take to help you with would not be the product of my labour nor even of my self-denial."

"Well, what's the use of arguing? It never gets us anywhere," said John Wade, striking a match and holding the flame to his pipe. It was very beautiful to watch the reddening flicker play with the shadows on his peaceful face. Hester Carr was soothed into mildness. Her artist nature was more impressible to such things than Genevieve's, though the latter did not care to speak further.

"Let us go home praying for a fine day on Sunday," said Hester, after a pause. "I want to see Angeline out in the fresh air. She was thin and weak to-night. I noticed it when I undressed her. How thankful we are for the cool weather! Of course, she will be better now."

John Wade caught at the encouragement. "Yes, yes. The frost will be a good thing for Goose Island."

"Don't you want to see the convenient bath-house he has made?" said Hester, turning to Miss Radcliffe. "John, get the lamp, so that Genevieve can see better."

He went in, pleased that they should be interested, and returned, shielding the light with his hand. The place was neat and fresh. He showed them all the improvements, the trough and the lines for the towels. "I have bought a little stove now for winter. I got a cheap little one for a dollar. It has no legs. You shall see it. It is just back of the kitchen. I was waiting till Sunday to clean it, but I can easily put it off another week. I will set it on bricks for legs; it will do me for that very well. Then in the winter I can dry all my clothes in the bath-house. It won't cost much for the coal. Hester, here, says only heathen dry their washing in the kitchen. Whether she's right or wrong, she always gets her own way."

They were quite merry on parting. John accompanied them within two blocks of the house.

"On Sunday at nine o'clock, and don't you fail for a minute," called Hester back to him as he was going.

He laughed a response, and they turned out of sight at the corner.

XXII.

ON Sunday morning Miss Carr came down to breakfast with doleful looks. "A messenger has just come from the Kendall Street Church choir-master," she explained to Genevieve, "saying that I am to play there this morning. I promised him day before yesterday that I would hold myself in readiness for any Sunday; but I had no idea that he would call on me for the first."

"Can't you send word that you have a previously made engagement?" said Genevieve.

"I don't dare to do that. They might not send for me again. Besides, if I go, it means three dollars in my pocket; and I am poor, and can't well lose three dollars."

"We shall have to put off the picnic till another Sunday."

"No, you must never do that. That child must have the fresh air. Besides, who knows what the weather may be in a week? We often have rains in the fall. No, you must go without me. It will be an excuse for going again, when I can go."

Genevieve was forced to consent, though she felt some hesitation about undertaking the day all alone.

"Perhaps Bettine can go with me," she said, "or Miss Morton, the new resident." But both of these had engagements, and she was half-relieved that they had.

Promptly at nine o'clock John Wade and the children appeared, arrayed in their holiday attire. He had purchased a white shirt for the occasion, and his cheap clothes were brushed to the very limit of perfection. He looked somewhat awkward and self-conscious. There was a suggestion of the disagreeableness of the lower class man that never appeared when he was dressed in his work-clothes.

"If there was time," said Hester, "I'd send you back to put on a comfortable shirt. The idea of a working-man's boxing himself up in that ugly thing, and that when he's going to the country!"

"Would you have me go out in my working clothes, then?"

"Why, yes. If they are better looking than any others you can get, I should. Why, you'll be coming out in pointed shoes next, and a stiff hat."

"No, I don't like a stiff hat. I always wear this kind," he said seriously.

"But where is Mrs. McLennan?" asked Genevieve, in dismay.

"I was going to tell you when Hester, here, began to exclaim about the white shirt," said John. "The old lady backed out the last minute. Said that her rheumatism was worse, and that she was sure it would rain before night. She felt the rain in her bones. That's Scotch. Once they get an idea, there is no moving them out of it."

"Perhaps it's only feminine, and no more Scotch than English," laughed Hester, amused at the situation. She was more merry, indeed, than the occasion would seem to warrant.

"Well, she was fussing all yesterday with the basket," said John Wade, "and no doubt did overdo a little. I suppose she is pretty old for a long day out in the country. Lord knows what ain't in that basket!"

"Now don't stand here talking and miss the train," said Hester.

"I'm not the one who is standing. Why ever don't you get your hat? Miss Radcliffe has everything all ready."

"Oh, I can't go. Just got word that I've got to play in the church. I told you, you know, that I had promised to go when they asked me."

"Then we may as well go back home," said John, turning about disappointed.

Angeline began to drop the corners of her mouth. She had been so looking forward to the country.

"No, we must go alone," said Genevieve, decidedly. "After all, we are doing it for the children; and I have some books in the basket to read. We will go again the first Sunday that Miss Carr can get off."

"I don't have the money to go off on a picnic every Sunday. It's all I can do to make both ends meet by staying at home," said John.

"Oh, well, I will lend you a half-dollar," said Hester. "I'll get six of them for playing at this church. Go on now, and don't stand to argue." She almost pushed them out into the street.

The excitement of catching a car, the disposal of the baskets and the children, the regrets that Hester could not come, and the wondering if they would be in plenty of time for their train took away all thoughts of embarrassment that they should be setting out to spend the day alone. There was a turbulent undercurrent of exultation in the feelings of John Wade, as he saw Miss Radcliffe sitting on the other side of Angeline in the car, and thought of the long day before them; but his face was as calm as usual, and he talked only of the ordinary things.

They had not long to wait at the station, but soon were bowling along through the black city with thoughts on the green country beyond. How the children seemed to enjoy it, as they looked from the windows! There were the river and the ships just as they saw every day, only now they were flying along on the train. Then came the thinner air of the suburbs, and flowers, and grass about the houses. Finally, they were in the real openness of the country. The trees were rich with

autumn colours, and the sky was blue and far above them. Father and children alike were transformed at the sight of it; and when they stepped off the train at the little country station, Glencoe, they walked as in an exhilarating intoxication.

With the children, indeed, the walking was a veritable dancing. They shouted and rolled and gambolled. Here was grass! They filled their hands with it. Flowers! and they tugged at the mullein stalks and burdock. Birds, too, and bright leaves fluttering like butterflies! And look! there was a gay little squirrel. Maybe they would find the nuts he was after. Eagerly on through the half-wooded pastures they walked, looking for a quiet place to stop, wondering at everything they saw, most of all delighting in the hills. At length they were satisfied with a place, and began arranging the baskets and wraps. The children dashed off for more flowers, coming back each moment to tell of some new wonderful discovery. Wade began telling of the days of his boyhood, when he had gone out with his chums for a Sunday in the dear English country.

He took off his coat and his hat, and very soon pulled off the stiff standing collar.

"After all, Hester was right," he said apologetically. "A workingman has no right to dress up." He took a black kerchief from his pocket, and tied it around his throat instead. Once more he was picturesque and fitting. His pipe, too, came out of his pocket; and the fragrant smoke rose in the air. How happy he was, and how handsome, his sturdy figure gracefully reposing on the ground, his head lifted up with hand and elbow! Genevieve, too, was happy with him. There was nothing unnatural in their situation now: there was no social barrier between them. They were two good friends, he

and she. He had given her as much as she him: he was strong, and she beautiful and sympathetic. She told him of her life the past summer, of the things she had known in her childhood. It was a peaceful, happy growing together; and always they came back to the children.

Then at noon there was the simplicity of the dinner. Almost they seemed to have gone back to primitive times: the man went off to get water, and the woman began preparing the food. When he came back, he threw himself down on the grass and related the incidents of the chase as she busied herself with arranging the table. He told of the dog he had had to encounter, and of the farmer's wife who had scolded and thrown stones at the dog.

"She came near hitting me once with a chip," he said, laughing; "and all the time we talked the dog kept barking and growling."

Then Genevieve began serving the food so sweetly in the woman's place and manner. She helped the children each to what was most pleasing, and was desirous that the man should be favoured. What matter if the smallest part were left to her? But he would not listen at all, and she was forced to share the best, in order to please him. The eating was long delayed, and the children skipped away in the midst of it. There was quiet reminiscence, still, at times, and long pauses of looking at the woods and the sky.

When at length it was over, she arose and put the things back again into the basket. He did not offer to help, but lighted his pipe, and sat smoking and watching. He could see that she liked him to do so. There was a new sweetness of service that Genevieve never experienced before. To-morrow this man would be working: all the year he was labouring for others. Why should he not rest now while she, womanlike, waited upon him?

When all was cleared up neatly and in order, she took a magazine, and wandered off for a walk by herself. Part of a day in the country, never to be overlooked by any one, is to take a walk in the woods all alone with nothing but the things God has put there,—the crickets chirping, the eddying of falling leaves, sticks cracking under the feet, the sadness for the summer that is past, the yellow ripeness of the sunshine.

Meanwhile the man John Wade was left to his pipe and his dreams. Shall we be able to forgive him if the dreams were not of heroism and ambition? Who has known the sweetness of the rest that comes after six days of labour? To have finished a good dinner that the woman one loves has prepared for him; to lounge on the freshness of wild grass, with the fall sunshine yellow and caressing; to inhale the soothing fragrance of tobacco, and watch his children playing about him. John Wade was not a hero. He accepted his life, and was thankful. He thought sometimes of the Indians who used to inhabit these glades. How happy and natural they must have been without any great folk and any masses! Just to meet a young maid and to love her, to have her love him in return, to be married and have children, together with the comfort and peace of the household. Genevieve Radcliffe had something of the Indian in her face. It had never occurred to him before, but he now likened it to the pictures he had seen. The straight black hair, black eyes, and high cheek-bones; then a certain severe strength in the features that was not concealed by the bloom of youth. Her voice, too, was liquid, mellow, and sweet, as if learned in the wild school of nature. Running brooks had that sound, the wind and the fall rain encouraged it. Birds and beast of the field would recognize and not be startled hearing it. Beautiful Genevieve Radcliffe!

To-day she was dressed in a soft gray cloth, that was fitting, yet free in its motion. She had moved about with springing, elastic step, waiting on him and his children. Her hat was off, and hanging on the branch of a tree. Some coloured leaves were in the loose bands of her hair. The bands were loosened from leaning against the rough bark of a tree trunk: they rested negligently on the wonderful curve of her neck. Her eyes, they were shining like stars! Beautiful Genevieve Radcliffe! Happy John Wade in his dreams!

Rollicking baby Joe came to rest in the arms of his father. Angeline, too, was tired, and came to lay her head on his lap. With his coat he made a comfortable bed for her, the garment serving for mattress and cover. Her tangled golden hair floated over the coarse cloth of his knee in fine-spun silken threads. She was sleeping languidly in a few moments, long before the boy was through laughing. In time, however, the boy as well succumbed, and lay in healthy sleep on his father's soft breathing body. The strong, warm arms folded over him: the pulsing heart sang him lullaby to sleep. From his chubby, mischievous face Wade looked down to the paler, more beautiful face of Angeline. How frail and pallid it was growing! Suddenly a great fear struck his heart, coming like a cold wind. Even the sleeping boy seemed to notice it. Why should the singing heart stop? Then it continued again, but the chill was not lifted from the father: it became more and more real in his consciousness. "What if Angeline should die?" it said; and it would not loose its grip on the laboured beating heart.

After the first fright was over, when he had reassured himself again and again, by touching her, by reasoning that it was only the effects of the hot summer, John Wade returned to his dreams.

As he looked at the sleeping child, he was glad that he had not been unkind to the mother. He knew that he might have been kinder, and yet it was nature for a man to be mean. He was probably not worse than other men. There was regret, but no pangs of remorse. The mother had loved the children, though not with his deep animal affection. Hers had been more the love of a monitor. She had striven to see them dutifully brought up. The father had often been chidden for being as free from morals as the babies: he seemed to get their point of view. She was a true mother, however, and had the mother's strong love of possession.

The dreams went noddily on till John Wade himself was asleep. He was awakened by the kicking of the baby. There was the feeling that he had been sleeping some time. He found that a light soft shawl had been thrown over him and the children. Miss Radcliffe was sitting under a tree a little way off, engaged in reading a story.

Hearing them stir, she looked up, and laughingly took out her watch.

"You have been sleeping an hour since I came," she said. "Did you begin immediately after dinner?"

John Wade was in no way confused. "I always have a nap after Sunday dinner," he said: "it is the best part of the Sunday."

The children had already awakened, and soon began again with their play. Angeline seemed hearty and well. There was only a suggestion of the chill remaining with the father.

"Suppose we go toward the lake," said Genevieve, "if you think the children can stand the walk. I should like them to look at the lake: it is the very best part of the country."

"Oh, I can carry them if they are tired. I can carry one at a time."

"Then I will carry the basket," she said, rising and putting on her hat. "We will have supper down on the shore, and maybe we can find wood for a fire. We will get home in good time if we catch the eight-thirty train. The children will be bright after their sleep."

They sauntered along under the quiet trees, watching the children's play, often stopping to look at their discoveries. The last was the wide blue of the lake, and they all hurried eagerly toward it. John Wade lifted the baby in his arms; and Angeline walked between him and Miss Radcliffe, holding a hand of each.

As they crossed the drive where the carriages and bicycles were rolling, it suddenly occurred to Genevieve, "And what if some of my acquaintances should see me?" Her face burned red at the thought, but they did not encounter any one. In some way Wade seemed to know what she was thinking, and wished to screen her as well. He was glad now of his white shirt and stiff collar: perhaps the people would not notice. They walked steadily along until they came to the high bluff of the bank. Then they sat down for a time; but, as people were occasionally strolling near them and no one was now on the sand, they yielded to the demands of the children, and descended the bank to the water.

As the sun was getting low, the majority of the people were going home. On the sand they were quite uninterrupted. They watched the waves for a time where the clear tints were deepening in the shadow. Miss Radcliffe tried to teach the children how to make a fort in the sand; but baby Joe thought they were piling up heaps for him to walk through, and insisted on demolishing them all. The father collected some bits of driftwood,

and lighted a tiny fire. Then they opened the basket for supper.

The wind had entirely died down; and the smooth waves slipped mysteriously in, whispering of the darkness in the east. What a feeling of seclusion an open fire gives, even in the wildness of the desert. The wall of dark gathers closely around it. The flames are cheery or the smoke is sullen. There are all of the whims of a child in the flickering. Our little family was drawn even closer into the magic of its circle. They put apples on sticks, and set them to roast in the heat. The children played about at housekeeping. Overhead was the peace of the stars.

"It has been a long, beautiful day," said Genevieve, after a silence. "I have not known a happier this summer."

"You have surely known many where you had better company than to-day. I am not much of a talker."

"I think one does not care much about talk, especially after becoming acquainted. We only keep up conversation with strangers."

"It strikes me about that way, too," said Wade, with the gentleness of one who is musing.

"I trust the air will do Angeline good."

"Do you think that she looks ill to-day? Don't you see an improvement since Friday?" There was such a tone of pleading in his voice.

"She certainly has seemed very well to-day. I am glad that the night is so balmy."

"I was scared for a minute to-day," he said hurriedly, lowering his voice. "Her face looked so wan when she was sleeping."

"You must not be scared," she said comfortingly. The baldness of the world made him near to her.

They were standing, looking out upon the water.

"If she is not better on Monday, I will take her to our family physician," she said.

"I don't know how I can ever repay you for all you have done for me," he began, with a tenderness controlled in his voice.

She turned to him, and put out both hands. Unconsciously, his own came up and clasped them. His hands were hardened with working.

"You have helped me, too," she said, simply; "and you will help me in the time that is to come."

He wished that he might die there for her where he stood, only he did not say this. Indeed, there was something of uneasiness in his hands that caused hers to release their pressure in significance that he was to drop them.

"It is time for us to be going," she said. "There is quite a walk to the station."

Their talk was of personal things on the way home, of their work and their plans for the winter. Genevieve told about her work at the training school, and described all the things she had seen and the people she had met. John told her of the summer that was past, of the readings with Hester Carr, and of his talk with the men in the factory.

It was but a little time till they said good-night at the gate of Settlement House. John would have gone in to tell Hester of the day, but the children were tired and sleepy.

He was tired as well, more than if he had done a day's work. This jaunting about was so different from what he was accustomed to. But he did not get to sleep till after midnight.

XXIII.

HESTER CARR must have been of elastic nature. There was no doubt that she had been anticipating the little picnic with a great deal of eagerness and pleasure ; but, now that she had ushered out John Wade and Genevieve Radcliffe to spend the day without her, it seemed that to remain at home could have been her only desire. She went flying about the house in her most animated and lively fashion, making herself ready for church and singing like a wren in the springtime.

She was home again in time for the one o'clock dinner. There was the warmth of the three dollars earned still to be felt in her pocket. She put her hand in to feel of them at times. There were such hopes of more dollars along with them.

She had dreams of Germany now. Who should say she might not go in the spring? "I will get one of Genevieve's books and read about Europe," she said; "and I will not go out visiting at all to-day, nor think of a soul in Chicago."

The day was well suited for reading. All of the residents had gone out for the fine air, the boys of the street were far away in some sport, autumnal quiet had settled down over the house and the neighbourhood. Hester found the guide-books she wanted, and, taking the Baedekers in her arms, brought them down to the sitting-room and began the planning of her journey.

She was almost deciding upon a certain neighbourhood in the city of Berlin for a dwelling-place, when the door-bell rang in the hall. "Nobody in but me, and I promised Mrs. Purcell that I would keep house. Now what if it should be some stupid!"

"She has gone out for the day," she heard the girl

Sadie answer from the hall; and then it was Mr. Neville's voice: "Do you know what time she will return this evening?"

"I'll just run up and ask Miss Carr," said Sadie. "I think she will be able"—

"Oh, if Miss Carr is in the sitting-room, I may as well speak to her myself. I shall have a message, perhaps."

Hester could hear him leaving his stick in the hall. She could hardly have been a woman, had she not looked in the mirror. She was dressed still in her church costume: she had made it for daylight performances. It was only a simple gown of thin black stuff that fell in fine gathered folds, almost severe in its surplice-like simplicity; a dainty white muslin ruffle at the throat, with others to finish the sleeves that were shirred in close at the wrist.

But out of this sombreness of colour her blond head rose like a flower. Indeed, since coming home, she had taken a huge yellow chrysanthemum from the table and fastened it carelessly in her belt; and, it being the only bit of colour about her, the eye was at once drawn by the glow, and the idea called up to the looker, "How very like the queenly chrysanthemum her beautiful, flowerlike head poises there!"

In truth, her short yellow hair that was not curling, and yet had none of the effect of straightness, combed lightly as it was from the crown,—this flaky, fine-spun yellow hair had something very suggestive of the chrysanthemum petals; and her neck was the delicate stem which they turned to.

Neville was impressed by the likeness immediately on entering. He thought of a design for a cover of the *Dilettante*.

"I am informed by the menial that Miss Radcliffe is out," he laughed, bowing. "It was a similar message

that I received at her home, the family being out as well, I believe, sitting at some tedious dinner."

"Genevieve is off for a picnic," said Miss Carr, graciously. There was something very personal in her smile when she chose. "She will not be home till nine o'clock in the evening. She is giving some poor children the air."

"Oh, Genevieve will be getting poky with enthusiasm over her missions. Now don't you regard an enthusiast as the most poky person in the world?"

Hester laughed gayly, and offered Neville a chair. It was a deep chair, and showed off his elegance to advantage.

"Now I wonder more and more at you, Miss Carr," he went on. "I can't understand why you should choose these surroundings. With Genevieve, who has a conscience, it is intelligible; but you, who are an artist, and"—

"Have no conscience at all." It was Hester who finished the sentence.

"And why not?" pursued Maynard Neville, boldly. "To an artist, beauty alone should be good. There should be no conscience except the æsthetic."

"If that were the only criterion, then I should surely stand for an artist. For I do assure you," she said seriously, "that I have no conscience whatever."

"I can readily believe it," he replied, laughing; but, in truth, he was somewhat taken back, there had been such a ring of sincerity in her tone.

"On that basis we are ready to become acquainted," she said lightly. She had no more concern in the matter.

"But what about my conscience?" he resumed, to keep up the banter. "Do you not demand a confession from me?"

"Oh, I need none there," she replied. "It was my first judgment on seeing you last winter."

"How deucedly agreeable she can be!" he thought, pleased, as most men are, to be considered a little wicked.

"I see that we understand one another," he laughed, and her bewitching head nodded recklessly.

"But tell me, then," he pursued, "since beauty is your religion, why are you here in this hideous part of the city?"

Hester was inclined to tease rather than answer. "And do you have beauty, then, among the rich where you are living? It is true I have not been in very many houses, but"—

"Well, we are an ugly lot, I admit," he interrupted, fearing that he might be forestalled in his favourite rôle of the cynic; "but we at least have a longing for the beautiful, and we try to appreciate it there."

He saw that his coveted position was evading him. He had been surprised into defending something by this half-wild girl from Colorado.

"Are you so sure it is the beautiful that you are striving for? Or is it only because the beautiful is at present the fashion?" said Hester, laughingly, in exactly the way he would repeat it when among his fashionable friends. And then she went on:—

"Do you know what beauty is? Do you think it is the artificial product that you are putting on your magazine posters? Let me tell you, then, that beauty is not that at all. Beauty—but I will not try to define it," and she broke down, as if with humility. "It is enough to say that, while beauty is much more than truth, it is required that it always be true. Now truth we have here among these tenants of the slums,—open sincerity and frankness; and you haven't it with your neighbours."

Neville rose and walked to the window. "Your eloquence is very good here in this cosy parlour," he said; "but let us put it to the test of cold facts. Look out on this street, and see if anything could be more ugly."

She also went to a window, but another one apart from his. There were two on that side of the room.

"If that same street," she said calmly, "were painted on canvas exactly as it is, and done by a certain French artist that we know, you would hang it in your most treasured place, and rave and write books on its beauty. And justly, too; for you recognize a true thing, when you are told to. Look at the forlorn sagging of the tumble-down houses, not even the spirit of despair in them; the diagonal line of the street which stretches away to the horizon. See the blue haze in the distance, how it is chilled into a delicate pearl colour. The smoke cannot entirely kill the light. God is nowhere without his witnesses."

She stopped here, breathless with her own enthusiasm; and he did not dare interrupt immediately with his frivolity. But, after a little pause, he said: —

"There is one thing, at least, in which you cannot accuse us of being uglier than the slums; and that is in our lack of perfume. Or do you even revel in this smell, because it is true and not manufactured?"

The girl felt that her mood had not touched him, but she was not yet out of her enthusiasm.

"I am not sure," she said somewhat wearily, "that Millet did not love the smell of sweat and soil when he painted his pictures of the peasants."

"But you did not mean Millet when you spoke of the artist who could paint this street?" he said, eager to lead the conversation back to something that he was familiar with; for, in truth, he had been very much bewildered

with this art talk that was about things instead of pictures. He had never heard things talked of at the exhibits, and had never come across them in the art criticisms.

"No, I did not mean Millet, of course. I did not know that he cared for the city."

Neville began eagerly to tell her whom she did mean, and to discourse cleverly on artists and their work. He had a strong desire to talk well before this girl, a feeling that he had not shone to advantage in the late conversation, and must retrieve himself now on new ground. He did talk well, for he did know a great deal about pictures.

Hester was inclined to listen with interest. Encouraged by her attention, Neville talked on, forgetting all about the length of his visit. Before he left, he had made several offers to take her to see pictures in Chicago; and there was one that was a definite appointment.

"I should have to start from my office at one o'clock," he said, "in order to come up here and get you."

"But why should you come up here at all? I can meet you in the lobby as well, and for that matter come home alone. I am quite used to looking out for myself."

He liked the freedom of this arrangement, and easily agreed to it.

"She is a deuced fine girl for all her peculiarity," he said to himself as he went down the steps. "I have not enjoyed a talk more this summer. Why, I forgot my message to Genevieve! No matter. I can write it."

XXIV.

FOR a few weeks after the picnic it seemed to the anxious watchers that Angeline was growing strong again. She was bright and responsive enough, even more so than usual, they thought, and played about in her motherly fashion, keeping house with baby Joe. It was only when evening came on and she would fall into a languid sleep in the very midst of her play that the father was frightened again, and would chill at the thought of her death, as he had when it first came to him out in the woods. He would put her carefully into bed at these times, not even waking her from her stupor, and decide to speak to Miss Radcliffe or Miss Carr the very next day about her. But in the morning she would seem so much brighter again, and Miss Radcliffe had done so much for him already and he hated so to trouble her more, that he would put it off still another day in the hope that it would not seem needed. He did not know that Angeline was taking long naps as well in the afternoon. The nurse did not think about mentioning it, since it was the custom of many of the children who were kept up late in the evening. But when the drowsiness came on in the morning as well, and the child seemed heavy with sleep, Mrs. Belden came to be alarmed.

"I think Angeline sleeps more than is good for her in the daytime, Mr. Wade," she said one evening while John was tying on Joe's hood. "Doesn't she get any sleep at night? What time do you get her into bed?"

His hands fell to his sides. His face was blanched as with cold.

"Why, she always sleeps like a log the night through," he said breathlessly. "She drops off as soon as I get her home. I don't have time to finish my supper before she's fast asleep."

"Well, I don't think it's natural; and I think you ought to speak to a doctor," said Mrs. Belden. "I will speak to our doctor when he comes in. He will be here day after to-morrow." She turned to other duties of her family,—a poor woman was just asking about her sick baby.

John Wade went helplessly down the stairs. The report of Mrs. Belden had struck him quite aghast for the moment.

He sat by the stove a long time that night after the children were in bed and Mrs. McLennan had finished with the work. He did not even think to light up his pipe, though he had filled it and placed it on the stove hearth. It was such a puzzle to study out about the doctor. Mrs. Belden had said that the doctor would come day after to-morrow. He would probably not charge anything. Still, he wondered if he was a good doctor. He wished he could see him himself. He wanted to explain to the doctor how the child really was. If Miss Radcliffe could only advise him. He believed he would write a note, and leave it for her in the morning. On the whole, this seemed the best thing to do. For a long time he sat thinking and puzzling, trying to decide on a way to begin.

"Miss Radcliffe,—I am getting a little worried about Angeline. As soon as I get her home, she goes into a heavy sleep, and does not wake till I shake her up in the morning. Mrs. Belden says she sleeps in the forenoons and afternoons. I think we ought to see a Doctor. I can pay. I want to see the Doctor myself. Can you think of any way I could arrange it without missing from my work. I have thought a Doctor might go to the nursery, and then I could call on him at night. Do you

know of a good Doctor to send for? I don't exactly like the one who attended my wife. Is the regular Doctor who comes to the nursery a good one?

"I hope you will excuse me for writing. I was afraid you might be out again to-morrow evening. I will leave this with Sadie, and you can give an answer to her in case you are going away.

"Excuse the pencil.

"From yours respectfully,

"JOHN WADE."

Genevieve felt some alarm on receiving the letter next day, and in the afternoon took Angeline with her to visit her own physician. Dr. Brown looked grave when she had recited the circumstances and he had examined the child.

"She should be breathing the purest country air and have the most nourishing food," he said.

Genevieve explained that the food was of the best, but that the father could not very well get away with the child, and that she was so attached to him that she would not improve at all if sent among strangers.

"It is so hard to say," he replied, "what will be the end of this. I do not know that my medicines will be of much use, though I will write you a prescription. If the father wishes to see me, he may call at my house this evening."

After supper John Wade put on his hat and coat, and walked over to the neighbourhood of the rich. He was shown into the doctor's study, and put on easy conversational terms from the first. It is a way that physicians have, it would seem. It may be only professional politeness, but it has doubtless occurred to many that physicians

are the only democrats in society. With them all classes are one, all people are treated alike. They are simply individuals who are in trouble and have come for help or consolation.

"Have you any friends in Colorado, Mr. Wade," he asked after some conversation, "or in any of the Western mountain States, who could help you to work, if you went out there?"

"No, I'm over here all alone. My brothers and sisters are in England. I have always been in Chicago since I came to America. Do you think my little girl can't get well here?" he asked timidly, thinking of the impossibility of going so far away.

"I am not sure," replied the physician, kindly. "If I were sure, I might see that you were able to get away; but I fear that the evil is done. I very much fear, Mr. Wade, that your child is in a critical condition; and the outcome must depend on her constitution, and not on what we can do for her."

"But isn't there something you could give her, some medicine that would strengthen her and build her up?" asked the man; for his faith in medicines was strong, perhaps from reading so many advertisements or perhaps with inherited tradition from his ancestors.

"I have prescribed for her all that I can at present, but it is not the work of medicines to build: that must be left to food, air, and nature."

"There are lots of remedies advertised in the papers."

"Look here," said Dr. Brown, warmly, "if I am going to have anything to do with this case, you must promise me that you will not give a drop of patent medicine, or, in short, of any medicine that I do not prescribe."

"Are the advertised ones all bad, then?"

"Most of them are. Some may not be; but, at all

events, any trained physician knows the remedies they contain, and can prescribe them if they are needed."

There was something more of argument on the point till the workingman was finally convinced. He went home with a heavy heart. "We have only to wait," he said. "We have only to wait and hope." Alas, it is the hardest thing of all!

And Angeline grew gradually worse. Heavier and heavier drooped the weary head, more and more languid dragged her listless steps. Her flesh was soft and without elasticity. Dark sickly shadows settled under her pleading eyes. It came about that they never spoke to her except that they smiled in speaking; but, when she was away and they spoke of her, none of them ever smiled.

It was nearing the Christmas season when she was no longer able to walk to the nursery.

"I think she would be better off at home, anyway," said good Mrs. Belden, with the tears in her faded blue eyes. Perhaps Mrs. Belden, too, could relate some sorrow in her life. "I am always fearing here that the noise of the children disturbs her, and we can call over and visit her till she is better and wants to come back."

Why is it that women will never admit the possibility of death? Why is it that men are always grateful to them for it?

"I will try to get off from my work," said John Wade. "There is no one who can tend her as I can."

The next day — it was Saturday afternoon — he stepped into the superintendent's office, and asked for a leave from work. He explained that his child was sick.

"It is as well that you came, Wade," the superintendent said to him kindly; "for I don't see how we could have kept you much longer. We are forced to lay off some of the men who have worked here for more than ten years."

He wrote the usual recommendation. "Business is dull now, and I see no hope for the future. However, it may look up in the spring. Call in if you are at the last notch." And the superintendent sighed as he dismissed him.

John Wade went home almost glad that he was free. He did not fear now, as he had, the being out of work. He could pinch, starve, and get along somehow. Besides, he had a little ahead: it would doubtless be made to hold out until — But he choked here. He must not be seen blubbering in the street-car, he told himself gruffly; and he stepped out on the platform, and entered into conversation with a man who was interested in politics.

That evening he made a formal farewell at the nursery. He would take care of the baby at home, now: it would be company for him to be doing it. He tried to thank Mrs. Belden for all she had done, but her womanly instinct cut him short. She would come over often to see Angeline, and he needn't be saying things that sounded like good-bye. Nevertheless, she was willing to shake hands with him,—the awkward, shoving shake of the strong, work-hardened hand that seemed now to speak its gratitude. They followed him down to the door, where Sadie must kiss the children good-bye. "Good-night, Joe; good-night, Angie," she called to them as cheery as ever. Then she went up to the attic, and cried like the child that she was. Mrs. Belden found her there a half-hour later, swollen-eyed, and with tousled and tear-dampened hair. She was neglecting her duties, and the mischievous boys were worrying at the door-bell. Only that night Mrs. Belden did not scold the child.

As for John Wade, he heard the door close behind him something as Adam and Eve heard the gates shut off Eden. There was warmth, light, and cheer shut within,

with him but the dark and the cold. Then, as he neared his own home, he thought of the haven that was there. How often had he crossed the steaming bridge and thought of the rest from his work! Never more tenderly had he looked around the corner of the great elevator for the little house in the yard, though he would never come from work again to the same home. At least here was a shelter till things were over, a quiet till he was ready for a change. Fearfully, yet steadily and methodically, in his workman's way, he entered the little garden and opened the kitchen door. It was a shabby door, even with his mending; and it objected to being tampered with at first. Then it admitted them with an impulse and closed again, shutting them in from the night.

XXV.

GENEVIEVE RADCLIFFE came to him often to watch by the drooping life. There was no longer any question of propriety. There was no longer any thought of themselves or the classes to which they belonged. They were two human souls, that was all: one of them was benumbed with great trouble, and the other was offering balm.

All day at her steady work Genevieve felt the grief within her. Then, when night was come, when the brightness of the dinner hour was over, she would put on her dark cloak and hat, and slip over to the little house on Goose Island. Promptly at half-past nine Mr. Nugent would call in on his beat; and after a word of kind inquiry or a cheery "courage, my boy," perhaps warming himself a few minutes at the stove, he would escort her safely home with respectful and straightforward conversation. They had grown to be good friends, this girl and the stalwart policeman. She had not thought a year ago that she could ever feel this way toward a man of the rank of policeman, but now her feeling was changing.

And with John Wade? Night after night, they sat in the little kitchen. The sick child seemed to like the kitchen best, and they would bring her bed out for the evening. Rollicking baby Joe was the common comfort of them both. He could not feel the heaviness that they felt, and they liked him the more that he could not. Old Scotch Mrs. McLennan would come and go, with few words, about her work.

Genevieve would embroider or busy herself on some garment for the baby, and John Wade would whittle at some toy in the hope to attract the sick girl's liking in case she should be better to-morrow. Sometimes Gene-

vieve would read aloud softly, and together they would talk of what she read. How like her own appreciation was his! It was as delicate and searching as a scholar's, and without the stereotype of the academy. She used to wonder at this criticism at first, and then it grew natural for her to expect it. While his views were in sympathy with her own, they were never often agreeing. His was the man's point of view, of strength and of justice and courage. She liked the milder virtues still, compassion and charity and mercy. And yet, strangely in this, his was the narrower of the views. It was his training and education that had made it. He would not overlook, he could not forgive, the breaking of a tradition. "It is wrong because it is wrong," was often a saying of his, "and there is no use of arguing about it." While her reason often objected and her satire often flashed at him, still she knew,—and he knew that she knew it,—she knew in her heart of hearts that this man was right in his judgment, and that, if it came to a point where she should act, she would invariably choose his opinion.

The life flower did not fade in a day. One week slipped in after another, and the sick child was patiently waiting. Sometimes she seemed to rally for a time, and her eyes would take lustre and interest. At such periods Mrs. Belden and Sadie, who came often for a call, would express their hopes for a quick recovery. Even Hester Carr would clasp more firmly the workingman's hand and look kindly into his eyes. Only Genevieve Radcliffe never spoke of a hope. There was a mute understanding with them: they must wait and be calm and be ready.

One night she had led him to talk of his future. He was always talking only of the past.

"You are a young man still, Mr. Wade. The great part of your life is before you."

His hand sought the yellow hair that floated out soft on the pillow.

"A workingman's life ends early," he said. "It is different with those who have wealth and education. They can live in a world not their own: there are books and art and travel, or they may give their attention to science or politics. With a poor man like me it is different. I am ignorant, but do not feel it in my youth. I have plenty of interest and pleasure. There are sights to see and women to love, and everything goes well for a time. But we soon grow tired of these things. The fervour of youth wears away. Then we are old before our time, when you are still hopeful and young."

"You are a philosopher, Mr. Wade." He nodded in an appreciative way.

"I think while I am working," he said.

"But you might educate yourself yet," she urged. "You might still take an interest in the world. Look, for example, at the needs of the workingmen of to-day; and who can help them so well as the worker?"

He shook his head. "Some men might do that, but I am not born for a leader. I have no taste for politics or any kind of public life. All of my time and thought is given to earning a living. How to get a job concerns me; and, when I have got one, it is how long shall I be able to keep it."

The golden head stirred, and Wade rose and bent tenderly over it. All that he had been saying just now Genevieve saw verified in the love of that motion.

"What does my little woman want?" he asked.

"A drink, I guess: I don't know exactly," said the childish voice, now so pitifully thin and weak to those who had formerly known it.

He brought the water, which her lips hardly tasted.

"Does the light hurt your eyes? Is the bed easy? Do you mind our talking?"

"I like your talking," said the child. "I seem to sleep better when it's going on. Now let me alone to go to sleep."

He settled back gently in his chair. "No, I have looked at it often," he went on as if he had not been interrupted. "I have looked at it often, and turned it over in my mind. My life is for the best part ended. The future is merely to go dragging along. It looks gloomy."

"But you cannot say that," she said tremulously. She was wondering at her emotion. "There may yet come new things in your life, new questions, new people perhaps." She stopped here for a moment as if breathless.

Then his voice interrupted, as cold and hard as steel. "It cannot be," he said. He went on speaking more gently, as if in obedience to the child's wish that he should be talking. "Suppose now we turn to some happier question, something more like that of your future."

"All that you have been saying would tend to drive courage from me, for I am but entering the life you are weary of. To me everything is bright and fresh because I am permitted to work. Why, that is the main thing in life as I see it,—the work that we may be allowed to do."

"But if one is not allowed to work, if I tramp and beg and take charity even for the privilege?"

"Then it is the temporary conditions that are wrong. It is not life itself that is at fault."

"I like my work well enough."

"And is not that the thing you should live for?"

"Perhaps, if I could be master of it. As it is, I am its slave."

"You must make yourself its master, then." Her enthusiasm did much to brace and arouse him.

"But a man needs something else," he said, returning to the old subject after a pause.

"And that is the outer world interest, I suppose? Well, it is your own fault if you do not find that."

"Yes, but something else, too." He turned toward the golden head.

Genevieve did not say a word more; but, putting her work on the table, she stepped softly over to where little Joe was playing by the stove. She took him up in her arms,—there was some foolish woman's pretext,—and, instead of setting him down again, she put him into the arms of the father. "Here is your son," she said playfully; and by the way in which the strong arms clasped the baby she saw that the man understood.

Young Joe, quite elated at the transference, was beginning a systematic search of his father's pockets. There was great joy at finding a knife; and stealthily he slipped down and away, lest the treasure should be taken from him.

"You see what a son is to me," laughed the father. "Your own argument has brought with it an answer. All he cares for me is what he can get out of me. Isn't it, Joe?"

The roguish youngster had hid himself behind the oven door.

"And yet it was a good argument," answered Genevieve, laughing softly.

"Not argument enough, however. In fact,"—and this he blurted out doggedly,— "what a man like me needs is a wife, though the Lord knows how I'd support one. I need some one that I can talk to on simple, equal terms. I need some one to look after me, to comfort me when I am lonely, to work for me, be my slave, if you like. I may as well tell you I am selfish."

Just then sounded Officer Nugent's firm step on the walk outside.

"Come in, Sam. Sit down by the fire. I was just saying to Miss Radcliffe that a man like me should be married. There is nothing for him, living alone."

"Sure, John, now's where you're talking sense." And the policeman caught up the baby, and began to trot him on his knee. "Is Angeline asleep now?" he asked.

"She doesn't mind the noise," said the father. "I wish she did."

"Did you ever see my wife, Miss Radcliffe? Of course not, for we live out in Austin. Well, you'd ought to see her once; and then you'd say all men should be married." He began to beg a kiss from the baby; but what does a boy care for kisses? Joe wanted the policeman's star.

Genevieve was ready to go. She stepped over first to the bed, and softly touched the hand of the sleeping child.

"Good-night, Joe. Good-night, Mr. Wade," she said. They seemed very cheerful at the parting.

But all the way home, and when sitting alone in her room late that night, her spirits were chilled into a grayness that she never before had experienced. She did not know what it was. The remote possibility of a cause had not even occurred to her, and yet there was but one strain in her thinking.

"What if John Wade should marry again!"

XXVI.

THEY dreaded the day she should die. When it came, there was nothing to dread. The little woman who had longed much for sleep, and had grown more and more peevish on waking, one day fell into a deeper, longer slumber, from which the physician said she would probably never awaken. It seemed well that it should be so. John Wade sat steadily by the bed, his hand sometimes touching her hair, a look as of stone on his face. Toward the last the women came and went often, but he gave little heed to them. When Genevieve was not there, he felt a terrible loneliness. It was almost fear in its haunting. And once, when she was going, he looked into her eyes in his dumb way. She understood this fear, and laid off her coat and hat, announcing that she need not go just yet. A wild, sweet joy had come to her in that look, tempering her grief for the child by a strange intermingling of feeling. The child was breathing slowly at the time. So light and slow was her breath that it seemed to hesitate for returning. That was in the afternoon.

Early in the evening the physician came, and told them she could not last through the night. Later on Hester Carr came in. She was breathless, as if she had been running. "It is raining softly," she explained.

The clock ticked. The fire burned in the stove. The trains could be heard rushing in the distance. Baby Joe had gone to sleep early that night. Mrs. McLennan had shut herself in her room.

Then came the faintest change in the one they were watching. A long, languid shiver slowly crept up her length from the feet: there was a weak gasping at the lips. John Wade bent over the bed, he was almost lying

upon it,—his back was turned to the women,—and took the child's form in his arms. He did not lift her from the bed to do it: his arms were close upon her sides. Genevieve clutched at Hester Carr's hand; and they stood, frightened, together in silence.

Then, reluctantly, the father raised himself up, still looking at the dead child's face.

"Poor little woman!" he said. And then suddenly, as if taking their fright, he walked into the adjoining room, and brought out the sleeping Joe.

"I seem to like to hold him in my arms," he said, pitifully.

And the two women fell crying together.

XXVII.

THEY were all calmer after the outburst, and it was Hester Carr who took the leadership then.

"You take Joe," she said to Genevieve, "and let John help me lay out the body."

It did not seem to occur to one of them that they could lay the sleeping baby down. Genevieve went close to the father, and he put the boy gently into her arms. Hester was busying herself about the bed, smoothing out the folds of the linen and folding the coverlids away. At the very first she had drawn the sheet over the pallid face: the drooping jaw was too ghastly.

Wade went out to the shed, and brought in a wide, heavy plank. It showed signs of having been planed and made ready beforehand. It had stood in the shed for some days. In the bleak, cold front room they placed the plank on two chairs, and the man brought a cot bed into the kitchen.

"Joe and I will sleep out here to-night," he explained. "The cot is wide enough for both."

Hester had been busy covering the plank with a clean sheet; and, when all was ready, the strong man took up the dead body of his child, and carried it gently into the front room, and arranged the frail limbs composedly.

Genevieve noticed that he did not carry it as if it were a live child. She had often remarked the same thing in the old pictures of the Madonna holding the Christ Child. The love was overcome by the reverence. She clutched the sleeping Joe closer to her heart. How good it was to have him fretting with the closeness!

When the water and towels were ready, it was Hester who still had command. "Go into the kitchen with Genevieve," she said. "I can do everything now."

"But are you not afraid?" he asked kindly.

"Go on. I have done this thing before," she said; and he left her, closing the door softly behind him.

He came, and sat close to Genevieve. Once he reached out his hand, and placed it on the child's head. But they did not speak to each other.

It was just ten o'clock when Hester came out. At the same time Officer Nugent's step was heard.

Hester opened the door, and spoke to him. Then they all went in to look at the child, Mr. Nugent carrying the baby, who slept on through all his transporting.

Angeline, or what had been Angeline, lay stretched on the board, the flesh growing stiff and cold. Two pennies rested on the closed eyelids. The lower jaw was bandaged tightly up. Only the golden floating hair was warm with life as ever. The women began crying again; but the men stood straight up, dumb and tearless. Then the father softly covered the face with the sheet. They went again into the kitchen, and began their preparations to go exactly as if nothing had happened.

This was Tuesday. They would have the funeral on Thursday. They spoke of it as they might speak of any work to be done.

XXVIII.

IT was a simple funeral enough. There were only Mrs. Belden and Hester and Genevieve. Sadie could not get away from her duties. The preacher came, and read a short service. Officer Nugent was there to help John Wade with the coffin. They put the plain box into a carriage, letting an end rest on each seat. Then the father and Genevieve got in beside it, and the others bade them good-bye.

Genevieve had wanted Hester to go with them to the grave. They could hire another carriage. But the girl had steadily refused. "I have choir practice at that time, and cannot afford the extra expense. I will explain to John, so that he cannot feel hurt. No: one is enough. Only, if you do not wish to go, I will take your place. But I think he would like you to go best."

So it was arranged, and the carriage was rolling steadily through the streets. Genevieve sat in front. The man had asked her to sit in the back, since the seat was more comfortable and wider; but she had refused, and chosen the poorer place. "I want you to be by the head," she explained; and he had acquiesced without remark.

The day was sullen and foggy, but not so cold but they could have the windows open. The air passing through cheered them up. The man put his arm around the coffin to hold it steady.

"Did you notice how solemn Joe looked when Mrs. Belden was carrying him away?" said Genevieve, after some blocks of silence. "I think he knew that we were taking his sister."

"Yes," said the father, thoughtfully. "He was sober that way last night after I had taken him home. Of course, he misses Angeline; but he will forget all about her in a few weeks."

"But you must not let him forget."

"I don't know. Perhaps it is well to forget the dead, at least not to think of them with sorrow. I should not like to have any one mourn for me."

"Oh, Mr. Wade! That is not the truth."

"I mean not to mourn more than is natural. They should not be encouraged to mourn, or should not blame themselves for not doing it."

"But mourning and remembering are different."

"Yes" — he dragged this out almost wearily. The streets went monotonously on.

Genevieve began thinking to herself. What a strange position to be in, riding in a carriage with a corpse and a labouring man! This was the second journey she had made with this man alone. Why should she be making them at all? Other people who gave charity did not do these things: they would think it strange and queer if they knew that she was doing them. Nor, indeed, was she now giving charity. This man was paying for the carriage: he had taken all responsibility upon himself; and yet she was sitting here with him by the body of his dead child, was occupying the place of his most intimate friend or near relative. And there was no escaping this thing. She did not wish to escape it. Why was this so? She looked at him furtively at times, as he sat with his arm on the coffin. There was something worn and haggard in his face. She could see little lines, as if where weakness and strength had been wrestling, running down from his eyes to his mouth. The blue eyes were dull and heavy. There was an ugly doggedness about the jaw, but above all the white brow still presided. She looked out the window again.

Then her ears caught a sound above the rumbling of the wheels, the sound of a strong man sighing. It was

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one of the long, quivering sighs where the breath is in-drawn to the point of physical pain, and then escapes in shuddering. She could almost feel his strong body being racked. She longed to bend over to him and take his firm hands in her own, but she did not do this. She looked steadily out the window, and tried to find interest in the dull houses.

When timidly she glanced toward him again, she saw that he had not changed his position. His arm was still holding the coffin, the weariness still in his eyes.

"How far is it to Calvary?" she asked.

"Seven miles the driver told me. Are you getting tired?"

"Oh, no."

"You ought not to have come. I should not have minded alone."

"I like to come."

"I wanted to have another carriage, but this was Hester's plan. She said it was a shame to go to such expense, when I am so poor."

"It was a good plan."

"I like to ride here," tightening his arm a little to show what he meant; "but it must seem strange to you."

"Death all seems strange to me."

"It is not so strange as life."

"John Wade, what are you going to do?"

She had never called him by his Christian name before. He felt the consolation of it stealing over him.

"You mean to-morrow? Next week?"

"Yes."

"I must tramp for work, I suppose. I can leave Joe at the nursery."

She thought of the long, hopeless journey he was to take up. "Dear God, have pity for the poor," she

prayed softly to herself as she looked from the window again.

They were passing some elegant houses of the rich, every sign of luxury and idleness about them. Her indignation flashed up like powder.

"Can these people be good and live on? Can they do nothing, and employ others to wait on their idleness? Must they not see that some one must pay for all this? Not only they, but all who wait on their folly must be supported. Food and clothes do not multiply like money."

Then she thought of her own kind friends, of her family, even, who did nothing. Her grief seemed to drown indignation. The monotonous wheels rumbled on.

"I had hoped to get a grave next the mother," said John Wade; "but all that part is filled up now. We must go some distance from there."

"Is it a pretty place?" asked Genevieve.

"Oh, it's all very much alike,—just a flat place filled in thick with graves. I had to pay more than I did for the mother: they have raised the price of lots. I paid a dollar and a half more."

"Yes?"

"Eight dollars down for one grave, and then two dollars for the grave-diggers besides."

"Do you have money enough?"

"Yes; I had a little saved up. I have paid for the coffin, too: that was six dollars and a half. Then the carriage is three dollars. Twenty dollars and a half for the funeral; and there were a few extras besides, enough to make twenty-one dollars. Then there will be the doctor to pay."

"You can let him wait as long as you like. I will speak to him about that."

"If he'd let me pay by instalments, say half a dollar a week."

"How much money have you now?"

"I have only three dollars and a half," he said, trying to smile. "But I think I'll get work pretty soon. I'll feel like tramping all day now: it will be less lonely than sitting in the house."

They were driving through the cemetery gate.

At the sight of the graves a sudden storm seemed to sweep through the body of the man. He was quivering to the very lips.

Genevieve was torn with compassion. The feeling was worse than her grief. She seemed so distant from him now. He was suffering so utterly alone.

They got out in a clumsy, stiff way, when the driver came to a stop. They were chilled and cramped with the cold and the crowded seats of the carriage. Not far from the carriage was a small, newly dug grave. The grave-diggers had just finished in time: they were even now cleaning their shovels.

They came forward in their kindly, business-like way to help John Wade with the coffin. It was short work to put the ropes under it and lower it into the grave. The cover was adjusted on the box. Then they waited for a moment before beginning to fill in, to see if there was anything further. The driver of the carriage had dismounted, and was standing with them by the grave. Genevieve was the only one weeping. John Wade took off his hat, and the men and the driver did the same. He picked up a lump of the heavy clay, and, breaking off a small piece which he kept, he dropped the large lump into the grave. It struck the cover of the box with the sound that is so hopeless and hollow. "Earth to earth," he said firmly, and handed the small piece he had saved

to Genevieve. She crumbled it up in her hand, and scattered it on the flowers that she held. "Earth to earth," she said after him, and threw the flowers and clay in together. Then the men put on their hats, and the diggers began shovelling heartily.

They stood by till the grave was rounded up and the head and foot boards were set. John Wade took out his pencil and book to copy the numbers of the boards. "You do it," he said, handing the book to Genevieve. "My hands are stiff with the cold." She wrote the numbers for him, he looking at the firm, clear letters that he had learned in the last year to love.

"Now we will go home," he said kindly. "I fear you have taken cold here already."

The monotonous rumbling of wheels was beginning again. Only now there was a difference from before. They both sat on the back seat: the front one was folded down to give room. There was a difference when they were sitting together. They did not seem longer alone: their grief was tempered and sweetened.

But little was said on the journey beyond the ordinary personal conversation, the plans for the afternoon. As they came in sight of Settlement House, the working-man's hand took the lady's. Perhaps she had intended it so, for she had taken off her glove from the hand next to him. He, too, had slipped off his coarse glove. He did not lift her hand up: there was no pretence of saying good-bye. The strong, warm palm just closed firmly over the delicate fingers. She could feel the tightening grip as his big finger-tips touched her palm, and then they did not move nor speak till the carriage had come to a stop.

Hester Carr came to the door to meet them.

"It is long after lunch time," she said, "but Annie

has kept some things warm in the oven. John, you are to come down and lunch with us in the kitchen. I, too, have only just got home."

XXIX.

JOHN WADE began tramping for work. It was not so tragic now as it had been a year ago. All the tragedy had ended in his life. There was no possibility of more; for hope must lead up to disappointment and ruin, and he was absolutely without hope. He no longer knew even fear. The baby Joe was well cared for and fed in the nursery. If he could not pay the daily fee of ten cents, they were willing to wait till he could pay it. They knew it was not his fault if he did not have work; and as for himself, well, what did it matter now? There was nothing to live for more. The boy would take care of himself. To be sure, his own comfort was to be considered. John Wade was a man who cared much for his bodily comfort, but this he learned to sacrifice in time. He could habituate himself to sitting in a cold house; and he found it was no great pain to go hungry for meat and the nourishing things of life, if he was careful to take regularly his portions of stale bread.

As for Genevieve, she found that she was powerless to help him now. He did not longer give her an opportunity to come to him, making excuses that there was no fire at home. Nor did he ever stop to see her at Settlement House, but was always in a hurry if she met him. At first, her hope was that she could aid him through Mrs. McLennan. She supplied the old woman with coal, and told her to prepare the man dishes with the groceries that she herself bought. It was no use. Wade was sullen with the old woman, and told her that he was not hungry. "Keep your dainties to yourself," he would say. "I don't care anything for them. I have bread, and that is enough for me."

The old Scotchwoman thought he was grieving for his

daughter and urged him to come into her room and sit by the fire for company. Sometimes he would, just to please her; but he would soon excuse himself. "I am tired and sleepy after walking all day, and I want to go to bed."

He gave this excuse to Genevieve as well, when she asked him to call on her at the house. It also served to keep her from calling on Mrs. McLennan in the evening, as there was no way of getting to Mrs. McLennan's room except through the room where he slept.

She did not understand this estrangement, and tried to consult with Hester Carr as to what it meant.

"I see no difference in him," Hester said lightly, her manner implying that she did see the difference, but she did not think it her place to discover it to another. "I suppose John is in the dumps. Who wouldn't be who is insulted all day because he dares to ask the privilege of earning his living?"

"But he seems to be offended," sighed Genevieve.

"Maybe he is. These working people are always getting impertinent. The idea of presuming that they have the right to take offence!"

"You know you don't mean a word of what you are saying," said Genevieve, almost sobbing.

"There, there, you little goose!" said the changeable Hester, running over to her and giving her an impetuous hug. "How do I know what is the matter? Why don't you ask John himself, if you want to know?"

"I can't get a chance," answered Genevieve. "He always evades me, though it is done in a kindly way."

"Well, why don't you let him alone? He is a man, and will take care of himself. I suppose some men can take care of themselves. Others can't, though. Now there is Mr. Neville: he can't, and you are positively neglecting him."

"Do you think he feels that he is neglected?" asked Genevieve, with compunction. "You see a great deal of him of late."

"If he does feel it, he takes it very lightly," laughed Hester; "but of course he may be only shamming. Still, I think your conscience may be at rest," she added, seeing that Genevieve was alarmed. "He talks a great deal of the independence of husband and wife in the married relation. Sometimes you would almost fancy that he meant to go on flirting with me just the same after he is married."

"He may flirt with you as much as he likes," said Genevieve, fondly. "I am willing to trust you both."

Then her thoughts turned again to Wade; and she added, "I have such a great fear."

"What is that?" asked Hester, uneasily.

"It is that maybe in his great grief for Angeline and in the uncertainty now of his life he may take to drinking again."

Hester laughed, but Genevieve did not notice it.

"I am haunted and haunted with this fear," she went on hurriedly and in low tones. "Sometimes I think he may have been drinking, and would avoid me for fear I should find it out. Heaven knows, I should never blame him, recognizing all he has to endure. Hester, do you think he is drinking?"

"I think not," said the girl, kindly; "but I do think it would do no harm to ask him. As you say, he may fall into harm; and you will do well to demand an explanation."

"He is so different and strange," sighed Genevieve. And the conversation ended.

Meanwhile how was it with the beggar in the streets? John Wade had come to himself. There was now to be

no more weakness. He had called himself up before court, had charged, tried, and convicted himself of a much greater crime than that of being offended with a lady. He, John Wade, a common machinist, out of work, and likely to starve in a week, was in love with a lady, an heiress, already engaged to be married to another,—a lady who had befriended him and trusted him. What folly! “Guilty,” was the decision of the court; and now he was serving his life term. There was never any hope of escape.

After two months of weariness and refusal,—he would probably have starved before this, had not the superintendent of the Randall Electric occasionally lent him a dollar,—after fifty-two days of mingled kindness and insult, he found a job at last.

It was one thawing day in February, when he had wandered into a small circus court. The gate was open for a moment to let some wagons out, and he was tired of the street and aimless and careless of what happened. He was thinking that he had not eaten all day, that he did not have a cent to his name, and wondering if he should go to the superintendent of the Randall Electric and ask for another dollar. All morning he had been working down that way. He probably would ask for the money. Still, he need not make up his mind for an hour.

“Get out of here!” said a gruff voice. “Move on, you stupid! Don’t you see this is private?”

But John Wade continued his thinking.

“Move on, damn you! Move on, you lousy”—There was something in the thinking man’s face that made the tormentor pause.

“What’s the matter?” he said kindly, but gruffly. “I’m in a hurry. I want to shut the gate.”

“I’m looking for a job,” said John Wade.

"Oh, that's what they all say; and not one of them will work, when you give him a chance. Look here, do you really want to work?"

"Try me," was the sullen reply.

"Then look at those bricks over there. I want them piled against the wall. You'll find a wheelbarrow just inside that door. First, help me to shut up this gate."

All that afternoon John Wade picked up and wheeled and piled the muddy bricks. He had not had a mouthful that day. He did not mind. He would think of a supper, and he would put off borrowing the dollar.

Six o'clock found him still wheeling. Just then the proprietor came out. Perhaps the gruff man had been explaining to him.

"Why don't you stop? It's six o'clock," he asked.

"I'm almost done," explained John Wade, timidly. "I thought, if I could, I would finish."

"We want to close up. Come again in the morning."

"Could you pay me for what I have done to-night? I'm pretty hard up just at present."

The proprietor handed him a half-dollar. Oh, the warmth and the relief in that little disk of silver!

"What's your trade?" the proprietor asked.

"Machinist."

"Oh! Are you good at carrying planks?"

"Why, yes. I have shifted a bit before for a carpenter."

"Can drive a nail yourself, perhaps?"

"As good as the next one."

"Drink?"

"No."

"Dead broke?"

"Yes."

"Family, I suppose?"

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"One kid : woman is dead."

"Well, it's hard times," said the proprietor, sighing. He, too, had felt the hard times. "Come around in the morning. I'll try you to see what you're worth. I can give you a saw and a hammer. I have some seats to be put up. I can't say how long the job will last. That will depend somewhat upon your work."

John Wade went into a cheap lunch-room, and ordered a fifteen-cent supper. Then he spent five cents for car-fare. He could walk down, he said, in the morning.

At Settlement House he stopped, as usual, for Joe. There was only Sadie in the nursery.

"Tell Miss Radcliffe and Hester that I've got work," he said ; "and tell Mrs. Belden that I will pay her something to-morrow night."

So it came that the long walk was ended.

XXX.

GENEVIEVE had hoped that there would be a change in Wade's demeanour, once he was settled down to work. She had waited, and tried to give him an opportunity to return naturally to their former relation of friendship; but, much to her disappointment and anxiety, he continued to avoid and evade her. He was always kind in his manner. There was a certain gentleness with her, not shown to any of the others; but still they were never alone, and he made all private meetings impossible. "I am always so tired at night," or "I have some work to do this evening," was the invariable reply that he gave if she asked him to call. The feeling that she had in some way offended him, haunted by the much darker possibility that he had taken to drinking again, was making her positively morbid. After a month's time she could stand it no longer; and one Sunday afternoon late in March she took leave of her own cosy home and started out to walk to Goose Island.

Her courage had in no way ebbed when she came in sight of the little house. "I mean to have my mind put at rest," she said resolutely, as she rapped at the door, "no matter how strange it may seem that I should come here."

The workingman came to the door. He was startled, and then confused, on seeing who the visitor was.

"Why, Miss Radcliffe!" he exclaimed. "Is it possible that you are over here? I supposed you always went home on Sundays." As yet he had not invited her in. "Mrs. McLennan has gone out this afternoon," he explained, as if by way of apology.

"I did not come to see Mrs. McLennan: I came to see you," answered Genevieve, determinedly. "If you can't

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come out for a walk, I must trouble you to step in a moment."

"I can't go out very well, and leave the baby: he's asleep now," John Wade said confusedly. But he stepped aside to let her in, and closed the door behind her.

"Come through into the kitchen," he said. "It is too cold in this room to sit talking."

They walked through, Genevieve glancing at the bed where the sleeping baby lay peacefully.

She took off her hat and her cape, as she had formerly been in the habit of doing. He awkwardly motioned her to take a chair, but himself remained uneasily standing.

"It is hot in this kitchen," she said.

He moved to open the window, and while doing so she took a good look at him. His face seemed stupid and flushed; his eyes, she thought, were bloodshot. "All this may have come from the close room," she reasoned. His coat was off, and his hair tumbled, as if he had been lying down. His pipe and tobacco were on the table.

"I have been almost asleep, I guess," he answered, as if she had spoken. "I suppose I look pretty tough. Did you want to ask me something, Miss Radcliffe? Has anything happened at the house?"

It was her turn to grow confused. "Yes, yes. I want to ask you something pretty soon. Is Mrs. McLennan quite well?"

"She went across the river to see Mrs. Gough," he said, nodding.

"I have not seen you for a long time, Mr. Wade," she began reproachfully; "hardly to speak to you since Angeline died."

He took up his pipe, and began to fill it. He would not look at her eyes.

"I have been out of sorts, I suppose. It breaks a man all up to be out of work."

"But now you've had work a month."

"Yes, but that may not last much longer. I have got the job I am at almost done, and I don't know that the proprietor will find me another. You see, it is a circus building where I am working, and I am helping the carpenter." He went on at length to speak of the details of the work. At least it was something to talk about. Genevieve listened to it all with interest, and astonished him with her knowledge of the subject.

"You talk like a carpenter yourself," he remarked once.

"Why not? Am I not taking the manual training, preparing myself for a teacher? I am reading all sorts of books now on carpentry and cabinet-making."

He laughed as he had used to do, and the sound filled her cup with pleasure.

"All very good child's play, no doubt; but it wouldn't stand a knock in real service."

"You speak without knowledge," she said.

"But I speak with reason," he argued. "Why, my boss was seven years serving his apprentice; and ever since he has been at work at the trade. How could you, then, begin green, and learn in a year?"

"I did not say that I was doing things as well as he does them. I only said I was learning to use the tools."

"Faugh! How can a woman learn to use tools?"

"That is what I want you to come and see."

"Very well. I will come some time." Then he saw that he was making an appointment. "I am very busy now," he added hurriedly. "We will not set a day till we can think it over."

The evening sun was straining through the window, its red light warning Genevieve that she must be going.

"Mr. Wade, I am going to ask you a question. I—in fact, I came to ask it. You have behaved so differently

toward me of late I fear that in some way I have hurt your feelings."

He was sitting silent and obstinate. "Shall I let her keep on in her mistake?" he was trying to think to himself.

"I am sure I don't know what I could have said or done," she went on humbly. There was the faintest tremor in her voice. He could feel her eyes fixed square on him, but he was swearing that he would not look up. "I suppose I am thoughtless at times. My friends are sometimes wounded at my bluntness, but I can only say that with you I have always meant well. I have always wanted to be"—

"In God's name," groaned the tortured man, hoarsely. He was writhing like a victim on the rack. He got up and walked to the window, turning his back square upon her.

She no longer was looking toward him, but kept her eyes fixed on the floor.

"Mr. Wade," she began again, "you are in trouble. I want you to let me help you. You helped me once when no one else could. You have helped me often and often. I have never told you how much."

"Have you not helped me, too, then?" he asked. "Do you need to think of the small things I've done?"

"I want to help you more," she went on, her soft words gentle and pleading. In her earnestness to be of service she did not realize the love expressed in her tones. "Mr. Wade, don't think I will blame you for doing it. I know that any other man would have done it. I know what a strain you have undergone, and I can imagine how a strain might weaken you. But can't you get strong again now? Can't I help you to put the longing aside?"

"What do you mean?" said John Wade, almost fiercely, coming over and standing in front of her.

Genevieve's eyes were still fixed on the floor. The soft, rounded whiteness of the quivering lids was almost more than his passion could withstand. The smooth bands of black hair framing the smoother white brow seemed all that could restrain him from touching her.

"What do you mean?" he slowly repeated.

"Forgive me, if I am wrong. I thought that you might have been drinking. I know how you may have been tempted. I know how desperate you were."

His whole tension seemed to collapse. "Oh, is that what you thought?" he said kindly.

"Then it is not true? It was only my fears. Will you ever forgive me for doubting you for a moment?"

"No, it is not true," he replied. "The thought had not even occurred to me. No, my drinking has been put by forever. Why, I could not endure the taste of the stuff. So you have been letting that worry you, have you?" He was speaking to her as if she were a child, his own child or one that he loved. His hands sought the back of a chair with their peculiar, paternal caressing of something. She was looking at him now, her whole attitude in childlike humility. It was as if she felt her heart in those hands.

He laughed quietly,—a long, low happiness of laughter such as we hear under only one condition.

"So you thought I was drinking," he said. He was so happy the struggle was over.

But the woman's persistence began again. "There is something else, then. There is something that you have not told me. I will not longer endure this difference that has been growing between us. I want to be good friends with you. I need and depend upon your friendship; and,

if I must be deprived of it, I must at least know the reason why. You are not the same as you used to be. There is something formal and reserved about you that tells me I must stand at my distance. I was foolish enough to think that the cause lay in you. I was vain enough to think that I had done nothing. I suppose you may think that I am forward and unwomanly in coming here as I do. Perhaps, even, you think that my motives may not be the finest. I know I am different from other women, but I had felt that you understood me in this. I did not think "—

"You may stop there," said the man's steady voice. He spoke as one who has always known the right of commanding.

In truth there was nothing for Genevieve to do but stop. Her voice had been growing more and more tremulous. She must either stop or begin sobbing. All of the anxiety of the last three weeks had come to its climax now. She felt that she had been wronged by this man, and wronged when she was yearning to forgive him. She sat quiet as he had commanded, her face flushed and eyes ready for filling. She felt all of her weakness as a woman, and yet had not yielded a jot of her obstinacy. She would have an explanation before she rose.

The man had walked over to the window and stood looking into the evening light. He was wondering whether he should tell her, whether things could ever go right on a misunderstanding. It did not take long to reach a decision. Perhaps the woman's determination to know the truth had more effect on him than he recognized.

"I am an honest man, and have done nothing to be ashamed of," he said to himself. "If she wants to know, I will tell her; and everything will be at an end between

us. It had better end rather than torment me as it has done in these last months I have known her."

"If you want to know, I will tell you," he said, half turning from the window. There was a coldness of steel in his voice that made her shiver.

"The fact is, Miss Radcliffe, we have made a mistake, you and I,—the gravest possible mistake, though I think that neither of us is to blame. We have only taken for granted some things that do not exist."

He shifted his position lightly. He seemed getting ready for an accurate narrative, and was marshalling his facts before him. He stood statuesque, almost radiant, in the evening light. His arms were lightly folded on his breast, his shoulders were well up with honour, and his square head set firm and reliant. There was a trace of hardness about his mouth, the satire of the knowledge of fate: but the blue eyes were kindly still, and the student brow placid as ever.

Genevieve did not speak, but sat looking upon him and waiting. All her soul was intent, holding open the gates of her memory for the future.

"When you first came to me," he began, "when I was at the miserable bottom of conditions, it all seemed easy enough. Neither of us could understand any difficulties. I was a common workingman, born into a certain class: you were a lady by birth, and we had no interest in common. There was but one tie that bound us: pity was on your side, helplessness and despair on mine. Then began the change. From your part the change came most, though I do not blame you for it. Believe me, in all of this misery I speak no word of regret or reproof. Well, you found out that I was a man, in time; and this interested you, and made you wish to know me better. Then, unconsciously, too,—and may God never forgive me

my ignorance of myself!—I began to know you were a woman. I should have anticipated where I was drifting. I did not. Perhaps I had been benumbed with cold and hunger, perhaps I was distracted by other things. You told me that I was helping you. It seemed good to be of some service. Then Angeline sickened, and I longed for your comfort to me.”

He stopped here, and his arms dropped tremulously to the window-sill and his eyes lost their effect of having focus. Up to this time they had been fixed upon a pile of lime that was glaring white in the mud of the barren field. Now they had turned their gaze from physical things, and were visioning memories of their own. It was a little grave that they saw, with its head board, on which was a number, “177—m.” There were other graves all around this, like fresh-made beds in a garden.

The man drew a long sigh, and came back to his narrative again. How strange and unnatural it seemed that he should care so little about it, when it had been his only concern for three months,—ever since Angeline died!

“When the child was dead, I had time to think things out as I tramped the streets, looking for work. Then it all came to me clear. I was a man, it was true; but, first of all, I was a labourer. You were a woman, and you talked of becoming a labourer; but you could not. You were born and brought up a lady, and it was your fate that you could be nothing else. It is true that there were things to unite us. If we were alone in the world, they might hold us together very well. But we were not alone,—at least, you are not. All your life is bound up in a life that is impossible to me: your friends, your family, your childhood and girlhood are things that cannot understand me. I read and dream of them, but they have no

call to read or dream my life. The mistake must not be kept up any longer. I mean we are to let all things drop. On your side the life might be kept up. On my side, you must see it cannot, unless you would cause me endless torture and pain."

His eyes had taken focus again. The lines of the satire of fate had softened to gentleness about his mouth.

As he finished, and stood waiting there, it seemed to Genevieve Radcliffe that all glory had dropped out of her life. Did it occur to her that she had the power to call it back? It appeared that she was only querulous with disappointment.

"I don't understand exactly. I mean that I don't see why things should all come to an end. You may outlive all this,—this knowledge in time. I don't quite understand what the knowledge is that you speak of. Perhaps it will change. If you mean to have me think that you"—She hesitated, fluttering, here. How like a woman to torture him on to confession! And, womanlike, she still had her way.

His voice was husky with agony. "I mean that I love you," he said; and the lips tried to say something more, but the muscles of the throat gripped it down. There was will in the lips, however. They seemed to be ruled by the brow, and they moved to be speaking again. Then up rose the shoulders to aid the throat, and the strong man's frame was like a child's when sobbing.

He turned again to the window, and the woman sat humbled in the chair. Oh, if she had not asked so much! And yet for her life she would not recall it.

Just then the baby Joe's fretful voice broke the silence. He had wakened out of his sleep.

Without looking toward where Genevieve sat, the father walked into the next room. It was some little

time before he came out. When he returned, Genevieve was ready for the street. Joe stretched out his jolly little arms, and laughed as he recognized her.

"See, Dada, see!" he kept shouting, pronouncing her name in his own baby fashion.

They were glad to give him some attention.

"I must say good-bye now, Mr. Wade," said Genevieve, holding out her hand. "I must have time to think things over. I fear I have done you great wrong." Her eyes grew very soft and pleading, and there was a beautiful uncertainty in her lips.

"Good-bye," she said again. "Perhaps I will write to you some time. At all events, you are not to regret what you have said. It is right that I, too, should understand. Indeed, it was I that forced you to tell me."

She took his hand firmly for a moment, then dropped it and turned to the door. He did not open the door, as usual, but walked to the window again. Long after she was well on her way he was standing by the window, looking out. Baby Joe kept talking and calling.

"Baby, baby," the father would say, thinking he was playing with him. Then Joe would laugh loudly and talk, but the father did not know one word that he said.

XXXI.

AFTER the explanation with Genevieve, Wade took more pains than before to avoid her. He found it easier to do so now. She no longer met him in the hall or waited for him in the nursery. At half-past six she studiously kept away from these places. He was cut to the quick by this; yet he was glad, he said, that she did so. It made things easier for him, and there was no misunderstanding now.

He was contemplating departure from Chicago in his helpless, dumb way. He had become so rooted here that it was as if a tree were contemplating a journey into a far-away land.

However, there were circumstances to aid him. The work at the circus was almost completed now, and again he would be set drifting. To hunt for work,—to ask, tramp, be turned away, to go on asking again,—he knew too well what it meant for him. He was tired of the streets of Chicago. Since he must tramp, why not tramp new streets? Perhaps a change would relieve him. All day here he would go about with this aching in his breast, until sometimes it seemed to him — half-crazed as he was — that he must tear out his torturing, swelling heart, and dash it on the stones of the pavement. The city had become unendurable.

Everything in it reminded him of Genevieve. His whole body, his whole soul, had become as a swinging magnet, to which she was the lodestar and centre. As he came and went from his work, as he moved in his work or in his home, he never lost consciousness of her direction, he never could leave off his yearning.

So many people talked of the country, and the chances for a poor man there. He had heard it often in the

lectures and talks at Settlement House,—this great evil of concentration in the cities, and the necessity of counteracting the movement by a migration back to the country. It was said always that there was plenty of work outside. There were forests to cut down, swamps to drain, rivers to control, fields to till. Unfortunately, John Wade knew nothing of the cutting of forests or the tilling of fields; but he argued that he could begin at the bottom and possibly work his way up.

Now his work in the circus building was done.

"I am sorry," said the proprietor. "You have been a good hand with me, and I like the way you take hold; but there isn't any more to do now. I can't afford any more alterations. I can hardly see my way clear as it is."

"No matter," said John Wade, methodically. "I think I'll try leaving Chicago."

"Where will you go?" asked the proprietor, with interest.

"I was thinking of trying the country a bit."

"Well, that's business. That's better than the city. I was raised on a farm, and sometimes I wish I had never left it."

John Wade had sixteen dollars saved; he had not spent for luxuries since Angeline died.

"I will leave ten with the baby," he said, "and take the remaining six for expenses." Then he began making arrangements.

He found a man and wife who would move into his place in the little house, and keep a lookout for his things and leave Mrs. McLennan undisturbed in her room. The rent was not very high, and they had the use of his furniture for nothing. Then he went over to see Mrs. Belden at the nursery.

"I want to go out into the country to look for work," he explained. "I wonder if you could keep Joe here. I can leave ten dollars to pay for his keeping until I can send some more."

Mrs. Belden hesitated. It was against the rules of the crèche to keep children over night.

"I can take him home nights with me," said Sadie. "He won't be the slightest trouble."

"Have you a good place for him to sleep?"

"Come around and see for yourself," said the girl, who was proud of her neat little home.

So the matter was arranged, the father agreeing to pay a regular sum, part of which was to come out of the ten dollars.

The next morning John Wade brought over all the little wardrobe and a few keepsakes from Angeline. "I will feel they are safer in your hands than with strangers," he said. He seemed to keep thinking of things to tell Sadie. It was hard to go.

"Good-bye, young man." He brought himself to it at last, taking the child up in his arms. "Dada won't come back for a long time."

He held the small face to his, and kissed it tenderly. They had never seen him do so before. He was not a man to display his affection.

"I will come back for Joe when I can. I promise to come back just as soon as I am able."

Then he handed the child over to Sadie. "It's hard to leave him," he said to Mrs. Belden, simply, and turned and went out of the room. On the stairs he seemed to fumble as a blind man does in walking, but the stairway was unusually dark.

"Look at the window," shouted Sadie; and when he was out on the street, he heard her calling again. She

was holding baby Joe in her arms, shaking his hands in a good-bye to Dada. The tears were running down her nose and her cheeks, her shoulders were shaking with sobs.

Both Genevieve and Hester were away. Hester had gone to New York,—there was talk that she was going to Germany,—and Genevieve was staying at home for a few days. Her mother was ill, and she was needed. John Wade had left her a letter. It was as well, he said, that he should not see her. The short note was natural enough:—

“Dear Friend,—I am going into the country to find work. I have left Joe with Mrs. Belden and Sadie. I left ten dollars to pay on his board till I can send more. I will come back for him as soon as I am able and take him away with me. I do not intend to live any more in Chicago. I hope that you will always be happy.

“Respectfully yours,

“JOHN WADE.”

He went back to the lonely little house, and continued his preparations and packing. The new tenants were to come in that afternoon, but he did not care to stay and welcome them. He put on his strongest working shirt, and rolled another with a pair of socks and some handkerchiefs into a small parcel, wrapping it well up in a newspaper and binding it securely with twine. He spent some time with this parcel, for now it represented all of his belongings.

Then he said good-bye to Mrs. McLennan, giving her a little teapot that had been his wife's for a present. He knew that she had always admired it. He left the key on the table, and went out, softly closing the door. He had tried to eat a light lunch, but found that he was not hungry.

A street-car took him to the west limits of the city, and thence he set out to walk on the level road that stretched out on the prairie. The day was a changing one in April, gray clouds and occasional sunshine. The straggling houses of the road — half city, half country, in their architecture — looked awkward and inhospitable enough. That night he would try boarding a freight car. He would walk to some insignificant station, and get on under cover of darkness. There was less danger of being arrested outside of the city. There were no policemen to be watching his movements.

Dreary and flat and gray the country road stretched out before him. Behind him were home and the city. Behind him were his baby Joe, with Sadie, and the flower-bed grave of Angeline within the walls of the Calvary Cemetery. Behind him, too, was Genevieve Radcliffe, the woman who had been his friend and whom he loved. When he had been near her, his life had been restless and in torture. Now that he was going away, that he was never to see her again, a great peace settled upon him. When once man's despair is complete, there is a wonderful comfort comes to him. It is when he still hopes that he suffers.

The road was long and dreary; behind him was the home of the city. John Wade walked on toward the distance without organized thoughts or feelings, like one who is stunned by a shock.

The tree was torn up by the roots. Would it live or die in the transplanting?

XXXII.

THE sun shivered into a bank of cold damp clouds toward evening, and the night gave promise of wind and rain. To John Wade the weather had never before seemed so important. It occupied the best part of his thoughts. In the city he had used to remark that it would rain or it would clear, and then think no more about it. Now he found himself asking the question continually, and with as much fervour as if it had been, "Shall I find work or shall I be turned away again?" It was so helpless out here on the road, where there were no lodging-houses or restaurants. Even a saloon would be welcome.

Then the dark came on, and there were no lamps in the street. The shadows crept like ghosts behind him. John Wade had never thought of himself as a coward. He had even liked the quiet of Goose Island, and laughed when his companions had pronounced it lonely; but on Goose Island there were always the lights of Division street, the lights of other streets as well, branching off among the lighted houses. It was often said that thieves and criminals lived there; but, after all, thieves and criminals are men. And here there were no men, only shadows and mysterious silence. If he might only meet a woman or a child, a dog or a cat, anything to remind him of people. Thinking of dogs led him, naturally enough, to wolves; and he wondered if they inhabited this country. He was frightened out of reason and knowledge. The next day, with the sun shining plainly on everything, he knew that he would laugh at such fears. Even now he would anticipate the laughter, and began a hearty guffaw; but his voice startled him in the silence, and was scared into a husky whisper. Then he tried to sing or to whistle, but

neither of these comforts succeeded: it only drew attention to his solitude, and called unknown dangers from the shadows around him. He next tried thinking for diversion. In the city he had not allowed himself to think: the misery it brought was unendurable. Out here in the lonely darkness even the misery of thinking would be welcome. But he could not think: he tried and tried, but for failure. Genevieve Radcliffe's face, how she had looked on some occasion, how her voice had sounded and soothed him, what she had said exactly, what she had probably meant,—one after another he called them up and tried to remember, but found it was of no avail. Not even his thoughts would torture him. His memory would not dwell on things past. All his will was set on attention,—the attention to the darkness of the night and the possibilities behind him.

It was still early in the evening, though it seemed to him as if it must be midnight, when he came to the welcome lights of a town. There were people, too, in the streets. There were gasoline street lamps on the corners, and the lights streamed out from the windows. A little grocery store was open. Some men were sitting there talking, and he went in to buy him some supper. The men all stopped talking to look at him. He had never had this happen to him before. Could it be that they saw he had been frightened? He looked to see if his clothes were disarranged, and tried to get a glance in a mirror; but there was no mirror in the store, save a little one high up in the back over a shelf, with a pail of water and a dipper. He had not the courage to go up and look into that, so contented himself with wiping his face with his handkerchief, paying for his biscuits and sausage, and walking out into the road. How pleasant it would have been to sit and eat in the store, under the influence of

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lights and of voices, if the men had been like men he had known! But these were strange and repellent. They looked at him curiously until he looked at them; and then they glanced away uneasily, and tried to make show that they had not been looking.

On the street he speculated on it. Why had they looked at him so? Perhaps men in the country were different. They were unaccustomed to strangers, and wondered who every one was; but in that case why did they not ask him? Nothing would have pleased him more than the question. He was at bursting-point with confidences and lonesomeness. Moreover, there was a chance of their knowing of work. But no: they seemed to look at him coldly. They had not been interested in him as a fellow-being. It was as if he were some foreign creature. Then it came to him that it was because he was a tramp in their eyes,—perhaps a convict or a criminal. That was the way they had looked at him,—as if they were recalling all the descriptions in the police reports of the newspaper. No longer were the lights any company. He hated meeting people on the sidewalk, and crossed the street once to avoid some men on the corner.

The railroad station was at the farther end of the village,—an ugly little shed, with a platform and some freight cars drawn up on a side-track. It was here he would try boarding a train. He looked about, to see if any one was watching.

There was no one about the place, evidently, save the agent who was in the little office. It was a good time to eat a bit of supper while waiting for the chance of a train.

John Wade was hungry as well as tired. He walked along the cars on the side-track, looking for a comfortable place to sit that would shelter him from the night

and conceal him in case any one should happen along. All of the box-cars were locked and sealed; but there was one open car for coal, and he climbed up into that. It was empty, save for a half-inch of coal-dust, but, at any rate, was something like a house. All it really lacked was a roof. He stretched out his legs on the coal-dust of the floor, began opening his parcel of biscuits and sausage, and told himself that the day had gone well.

After supper came the comfort of the pipe, and with it more rational thoughts. He had not brought the meerschauum that Genevieve Radcliffe had given him. That had been left with Sadie, along with his other treasures. A short apple-wood here answered the purpose very well. The fire was close under his nose, but even the uncomfortable proximity had something of companionship in it. Blessed be that comrade, the pipe! If it is vicious, then let vices be blest.

Wade was more rational now. The four walls of the car, —were they not the four walls of his house? The sky,—was it not his roof? If rain should come in the night, could he not crawl under the car? Then his bundle of possessions was with him. He had started out seeking his fortune.

Gradually the soothings of nicotine were assisted by weariness and sleep. He was very cold as he slept. There was a consciousness of moisture and the binding and twisting of clothes. Most of all there were vague, troublesome dreams; but, for all that, the traveller slept. The loneliness and fears were forgotten.

It must have been about three o'clock in the morning when he was awakened by the rushing of a train. One or two had gone by before this, but they were passengers or else going the wrong way. This he saw was a freight, and was headed away from Chicago. Hastily he scram-

bled up, fastened the laces of his shoes which he had loosened to relieve the aching of his feet, and, making sure of his bundle and the remainder of the biscuits and sausage, he climbed down from his house-car and ran for the train. He was on the side away from the station. He remembered having heard that this was a good point, as the conductor always kept on the station side. He ran up and down, looking for a place to get on. It seemed a long line of box-cars that were carefully locked and sealed. If he could only find an open car like the one in which he had slept! He ran till he reached the caboose, but there was not a place to be found. Then he started back toward the engine. Was it possible that he could not find a place? On the other side of the train a man was coming with a lantern. It was probably the conductor returning from the engine. Wade did not think to stop and let the man pass him, he was in such haste to search all the train. He did stop when the man got almost opposite, but too late. He had been heard, and was caught.

"Hey there! What are you doing over there?" a gruff voice called out angrily.

Wade stood still, hardly breathing.

"Hey there! Where are you going there?" The man moved as if to step in between the cars.

"I'm just going down here," said Wade, humbly and sullenly.

"Well, don't try any monkey work getting onto this train. I'll have you arrested in the next town." And, with a few oaths to make the threat emphatic, the man tramped on toward the caboose.

Wade did not give up. He would board the train if he could; and he started to run toward the engine, looking for a place to climb on. All box-cars, and all of them

locked! He would be discovered if he tried to ride on top. The brakemen were always walking back and forth. Then slowly the train began to move, and still he had not caught up with the engine. He put forth all his efforts to see if he could not find one car. Where he ran were coarse cinders and stones. Just as he came up to the engine and saw that the last car was closed, he stepped into a crossing-guard for cattle, made of slats and barbed wire, stretched over a pit. He was thrown headlong, full on his face. He jumped up, and staggered back from the lumbering wheels as the great cars increased in their speed. Still it was in his mind to catch hold, but he could see no possible opportunity. On the rear platform of the caboose, with a lantern in hand, was standing the man who had hailed him. Another man was standing beside him. They were looking to see if the tramp had got aboard; and they shouted in derision as they saw him, his face black and bleeding as he stood, still staggering on the slats of the trap.

"Not quite smart enough, hey?" they laughed as they swung the lantern in his face. "Lucky for you, or you'd been in the jug before morning. No free rides on this train." And their threats were lost in the distance.

John Wade stood beside the track with the wickedness of a murderer in his heart. If he had had a pistol, he might even have shot at those men, they were so fiendish and brutal in their laughter. Yet he knew, when he stopped to think, that they were but doing their duty; that he might do the same in their places, especially to a criminal tramp. He was a criminal, a thief: there was not any doubt about that. He had tried to steal something from the railroad company, and justly he had met with repulse.

He had no humour for going back to his cold bed now

in the car, and sullenly decided to walk on after the train. He was a common tramp and a thief, alone and sleepless and hungry. But, whenever he thought of the jeering laughter of those men, there was the fierceness of murder in his blood.

XXXIII.

IT was much better, indeed, walking along in the night than lying in the cold damp of the car. The exercise made him warm; and his violent anger at the train-men, together with his shame of himself, kept him now from the fear of the shadows that he had experienced before.

Tramp, tramp, steadily putting one foot ahead of the other, the night would some time end, the day would some time dawn.

The path on which he walked was smooth and dry, being formed of beaten cinders. On the whole, it was much better than the wagon-road, as it was more direct, and elevated from the surrounding country, thus avoiding the haunting shadows. Moreover, the iron rails and the ties made him think of the city; and the city was home to him. He loved it passionately already. He had not forgotten to pick up the parcel of biscuits and sausage which he had thrown when he fell in the cattle-guard. It was a comfort now to be munching. It was more comfort to be smoking afterward. Tramp, tramp, through the dark of the night. He was leaving his life and the city.

The gray dawn crept in imperceptibly. There were farm-houses scattered about on the flat prairie, and ahead was the smoke of a town. Nothing more dreary and gray and monotonous had he ever seen in the city. He came to the town, passed through it and well into the country again before the sun showed where the east lay. He sat down for a time on the projecting beams of a low culvert bridge, and looked at the morn-tinted clouds. Then he went down to a small pool, washed his face, hands, and neck, and came back to the bridge to comb his hair with the small comb he had in his bundle. There

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was a tiny mirror, too, that he had brought; and he examined the scratches and bruises that he had received in his fall. They were not so bad as he had feared, most of the blood having come from his nose. There was an ugly gash over his eye, and the skin was roughed up and raw on one cheek. It seemed that he had fallen on one side. The palms of his hands were lacerated, and the washing made the wounds smart afresh. Still he watched the growth of the dawn. It was the first sunrise he had seen in the country, though he remembered them well when at sea.

In the course of the forenoon Wade asked two men if they knew where he could get work. One of them was an old man, ploughing. The old man spoke very little English; and, besides, he was hard of hearing. Finally, he seemed to understand; but he did not know of any work. The second man was a young fellow driving to the town to get a plough sharpened. He looked at Wade curiously.

"No, there's no work in the country," he said. "Where did you come from? Chicago? Well, you'd better go back, if you did. Why, people are going from here there all the time to get work. I'm thinking of going myself. I understand that a driver there gets as much as two dollars a day." He seemed interested only in himself and in the chance of his going to Chicago.

Late in the afternoon Wade passed a man drawing water from a well that was very near to the railroad.

"Hello, Bill!" called the man, good-naturedly. "What is the matter with you that you're walking?"

Wade explained that he was looking for work.

"Oh, well, don't be hoofing it so. Just take a cheap ride on a freight."

"It's too much like stealing," said Wade. "I tried it last night, and I felt like a thief when they caught me."

"Oh, you don't know the ropes. You can pay if you want to. Just go on a mile down the road to where you see the water tank yonder. Wait there till the evening freight comes along. It will come in an hour or so. Then, when the conductor is out of sight, just tell the brakeman that you will give him a quarter for a ride. Have you got any money?"

"I've got five dollars and five cents," said John Wade.

"Well, don't tell the brakeman that. Tell him a quarter is all that you've got. He'll let you ride for that, and you'll need the rest later on."

Sure enough, after Wade had waited an hour at the tank, along came the evening freight. The engine stopped to take water, and Wade looked about for a brakeman. He found one near the middle of the train.

"I'll give you a quarter for a ride," he said.

"Not enough. I want half a dollar," said the brakeman. He was a young fellow, and seemed very good-natured.

"A quarter is all I have got," said John Wade.

"Oh, yes? All right. But keep a lookout for the conductor," said the brakeman, holding his hand for the money.

"First show me where I'm to ride."

"Oh, you needn't be so suspicious. I'm a man of my word," growled the young fellow, not liking the doubt of his honour. "Climb on those stones. Keep your head well down. The train will stop at a town about five miles ahead; and, when I whistle, you tumble down and run back to a box-car that is half full of lumber. Watch sharp that you're not seen by the conductor."

Wade handed him the quarter, and climbed up on to the stone. Another man was hiding there already, a rusty tramp of the road, who looked as if he had been drinking.

"Heads down!" shouted the brakeman; and the train pulled away from the water tank.

"How much did you pay?" asked the tramp.

"A quarter," said Wade, curtly.

"Hell! He got forty cents out of me."

Then each retired to his own thoughts. Ah, how delicious it was to lie on the hard, shaking blocks of stone and enjoy the rest from the weariness in his bones!

The long train swung through the mild evening air. The landscape glided behind them. How different if they had been walking, step by step, painful and plodding and weary! The train stopped in time at the station, and the brakeman came back calling them.

"Down, and run back six cars," he said. "Get into the seventh. The door is part open. Cut!"

Wade and the tramp clambered down, and ran as if for their lives. Sure enough, the door of the car was open. They climbed in and crawled back on some lumber.

Then the brakeman found time to look in. "This car will stop at the junction, and stand on the side-track all night. Then it will be pulled on to Stanley. If you happen to be going that way, stick to it." Then he closed the door, and they saw no more of him at all.

"How far is the junction?" John Wade asked of the tramp.

"About forty miles, I guess. Good pay he's getting. Charges a cent a mile."

"And where is Stanley?"

"Oh, that's east and south, down in the mining region. Where are you going?" he asked.

"Looking for work," was the reply.

The tramp looked at him curiously.

"I am for Denver," he said.

The tramp was red-faced and coarse, his garments

reeking with filth. There was an ugly leer in his eye. He had cold, fishy eyes, with little expression. The leer seemed petrified in them.

John Wade wondered if he might ever have become like this. Suppose he had not left off drinking or had not known Genevieve Radcliffe. But no: the idea was preposterous. Even if he had drunk himself to death, he would never have been like this man. Coarseness of nature is deeper than drink, or deeper than love, if that may be.

The tramp told about riding on the trucks underneath the car, how the wind and the dust from the flying ground beat up and cut holes in his face and loaded his hair and features with mud, how the muscles of the arms and legs clinched and set till he hung there like a piece of wood. It seemed impossible to let go, and he was surprised that he was able to do so when the cars had come to a stop. Many men fell off, and were killed. Those who hung on were hammered with the motion of the trucks and pounded with the flying stones and sand till they were more like lumps of beefsteak than men. This tramp had taken such a ride only two days before. Then a farmer had given him half a dollar, and to-day he was taking things easy. No wonder that his face was still red. He had not been able to eat: the whiskey was all he could touch. Wade listened half breathless, and forgot his own troubles in thinking. Here was a man but little higher physically than a worm; and yet he was talking the language of men, and perhaps with the feeling of men.

It must have been near ten o'clock when their car was side-tracked at the junction. The tramp slipped out to look for a chance to go on, and Wade made ready for sleep. To-night he was thankful for a roof, and he stretched him-

self out on the sweet-smelling lumber. Train-men were passing with lanterns all the night, and he was in constant dread of discovery. There was not the slightest chance that they would find him. He simply had the hunted criminal feeling. Restlessly and feverishly he slept, dreaming of the tramps on the trucks.

The gray dawn was stealing into the car, chilling even more than the darkness, when a backing train bumped up with a crash, and drove the man lying in a stupor full six feet sliding on the boards. Then, after various shakings and bumpings, the train was fully made up; and again they were in steady motion. It was light enough to look out now, and John Wade could see that they were travelling through flat country more dreary than that he had known yesterday. Was it possible that he had not been two days out of Chicago? It seemed to him as if it had been years.

The sun was up full two hours when a brakeman opened a sliding door at the top, and slipped himself into the car. He was seeking a quiet place for breakfast, and chanced on the hiding man.

"Hullo!" he said good-naturedly, evincing little surprise.

"Good-morning," said Wade.

"When did you get on?"

"A brakeman put me on yesterday evening forty miles down the main road."

"Oh," good-naturedly beginning on his breakfast.

"How much did you tip him?" he asked.

"A quarter."

"Very little. Got another quarter for me?"

"I'm looking for work, and haven't any money to spare."

"But riding is cheaper than walking."

"Well, here is a quarter," said Wade. "How far are you going to take me?"

"To Stanley. Have a bite of bread and ham? There is more here than I can get rid of."

Then they sat talking and eating together. It was worth the quarter for the company.

"We'll be in soon, and I must pull out," said the brakeman, making ready to go.

"You won't get any work in Stanley. There is a strike on here at the mines. Better take the evening freight, and go south. Get off as soon as the train slows up. There will be a crowd around the station."

He slipped out, half closing the door.

XXXIV.

THE town of Stanley was as if one of the most forlorn districts of Chicago had been picked up bodily and dropped, with some shaking and scattering in the process, upon a flat, gray, smoky plain, relieved only by huge piles of blue clay and cinders, with grim iron derricks and chimneys. Even the sky here was barren, and scorned fleecy clouds or clear colors.

There was evidence of rebellion in the town. Sullen-mouthed men, foreigners chiefly, stood about in defiant groups.

To a man who was looking for work nothing could be more hopeless or disheartening. The ugly chimneys would not even smoke. The doors were closed to the engine-houses.

"Looking for a job," grumbled one man in answer to a question. "There's four thousand men in your fix in this town, and they're tramping all over the country."

Wade sat down in the shade of one of the elevators, and tried to think it all over. First he counted his money.

"I am hungry and sick from exposure and cold of these two nights," he said to himself crossly, at last. "I am really making a fool of myself. I must go and get something to eat."

He jumped up so quickly that it made his head dizzy, and walked over into the town. The brakeman had said that the freight would come in the evening, so he might well make himself comfortable until then. He found an eating-house for workingmen, and went in and got a breakfast from the slatternly woman in charge.

After he had eaten, he went off by himself, and sat down under a water tank by the car-tracks. His pipe was

comfortable and soothing. The warm day lulled him to sleep. His drowsy napping was interrupted by a negro, who had also come to wait for the freight.

When at length the heavy train pulled in and had come to a stop, a brakeman came running toward them.

"Have a ride?" he asked. "Fifty cents for a full hundred miles. This train goes clear to Fort Madison."

"A quarter," said John Wade.

"No. Fifty cents or no go, and I look that there isn't any stealing."

The negro agreed, and paid his money.

Wade was sick of the place, and saw no other way out of it. "All right," he said, giving the money. "Show us where to get on."

"Wait till the train is ready to pull out, then get into the coal car there," said the brakeman. "It is the seventh car ahead of this. Keep an eye out for the conductor."

He left them; and they waited their chance, counting the cars as the train pulled slowly by them. John Wade thought that there might not be any open coal car, and that the brakeman might have wanted only their money; but the negro said it would be all right, and the seventh car was open, as he said. The train was running good speed when the car came even with them. They made a jump for it, however, aiming to catch on the sides. The negro failed to make it, but John Wade got his hands on the edge. The momentum of the train gave him a terrible wrench, and his body swung out like a pendulum until he could recover and clamber in. He hoped that the negro had not fallen under the wheels. It might have happened as likely as not. John Wade crouched down breathless, and waited. The train seemed to be slowing up. They were switching on to a side-track. Supposing the empty car should be left. What could be more natural than

leaving an empty coal car in this coal mining town? He heard some one clambering into the car, and thought he had been discovered. But it was only the negro getting in.

"I had a narrow escape," he said in his thick voice as he lay down on the floor of the car. "When I fell, the car-wheels brushed my fingers. A quarter of an inch, and they would have pinched me." He held up his hands, and looked at the whole fingers half humourously.

"Look out for the bumping," he whispered, bracing himself as if for a shock, and sprawling out on his back in the coal dust.

The backing train crashed up against their car, and they went ploughing head first through the coal chips. The dust rose, and settled thick on them. Then the train pulled up again, the loud clanking of the couplings running along the train as it started being succeeded by the humming and grinding of the wheels.

Once more they were left on the side-track, the engine puffing off without them.

"We shall get left yet," said John Wade.

"Oh, that brakeman is all right. Don't you worry about him," said the negro. "He said get into the seventh car, and the seventh car will go. Men can be trusted to keep their word."

John Wade felt the rebuke, and waited till the engine should come back. Four times they were switched off on the side, and four times the shoving cars pounded back. The two men slid about on the bottom of their car, ploughing their heads into the coal dust. Their clothes, hair, and features were filled with the clogging stuff. They were bruised and scratched up with slivers. Once John Wade wanted to get up in a corner and brace himself for the shock, but the negro advised him not. There

was danger of serious bruises. He lay taking the forced slidings philosophically, telling off the probable car that they would leave.

"You see there's a strike on here," he said, "and they won't leave empty coal cars in this town."

Sometimes men came running along the track. They were afraid they might see them through the cracks and kept as flat as possible. Once a man jumped on the car. It was the friendly face of their brakeman.

"Lay low," he said reassuringly, and then leaped down to the ground.

The sky was dark before they pulled out of Stanley, and the two men could dare to sit up.

XXXV.

ATHIN fog was gathering over the plain, promising disagreeable chills for the night. The clanking cars slipped along through the darkness bearing them away from Chicago, farther and farther away.

"We are a hundred miles now," said the negro; and John Wade never questioned that he knew.

About nine o'clock, shortly after they had left a little village, the train came to a sudden stop.

"What's the matter now?" said the negro.

There were sounds of other engines ahead. The open car in which the two men lay was only the fifth from the tender, and they could distinctly hear voices of men. The bells, too, were steadily ringing,—the bells of two engines, they were sure.

Then the conductor and brakeman came along, carrying lanterns, their feet crunching in the cinders at the side of the track. They were going ahead to reconnoitre, and our two men listened to catch their words.

"An accident, I guess," said the negro. "We may be hung up here for all night."

They waited another half-hour. "I'll go ahead and see," he said restlessly, and slipped down from the car to the ground.

John Wade lay silent, and waited. He was stiff and benumbed with the cold, and still was half drowsy with sleep.

Later on he heard women crying. A crowd of them was passing the car. He listened awake for some time, and the bells kept ringing steadily. Was it the knell of a dead engineer?

The negro came back in an hour, and crept into the corner of the car.

"A collision," he said briefly, "of two freights. The engines are badly stove up, and one engineer and two firemen are killed. Some of their women have come out from the town."

"Is that why they are tolling the bells?" asked John Wade.

"No. That's for warning to other trains. I guess that's what kept our train from smashing into them."

"When will we go on?"

"In a few hours, the men seem to think. I guess we have got to stick it out."

They lay silent for some time, listening to the tolling bells and thinking of the three men who were dead.

"This fog will freeze us stiff," said the negro.

"Come over and let us lie up close together," said John Wade. "We will help to warm each other."

The negro left his corner, and clumsily lay down by the white man. Accidentally, their hands came together.

"Why, you are stiff as a board," the negro said, with gentleness in his voice. "I have been warmed by running around."

"I am cold," said John Wade, dully.

The negro moved up close to him.

"Turn on your side with your back to me," he said.

Then, as the white man did so, the negro put his strong arm over to shelter him, and held him in close, warming embrace. He was a big man with strong animal warmth, and no doubt there was something of it in his heart.

John Wade did not think of the difference, covered with coal dust as he was. He himself was as black as his companion. He was very grateful for the warmth received from him, and soon was dozing in fitful sleep.

The bed must have been more comfortable than they thought, for there was a grayness of dawn in the fog when

he was wakened by some one climbing into the car. The negro was still sleeping soundly, and his arm gripped as tight as a vise.

"Hey there!" called the brakeman, cautiously. "Wake up! lively there! We are going on pretty quick. This car's going to be left. Run ahead, and get into the rack of the cattle car. It's the seventh car ahead of this. Be lively, and keep on that side of the train."

The negro had waked in a moment, and had heard every word that he said.

"Come on!" he said to John Wade, and was over the side of the car in an instant.

As the train was about to start, they ran along, counting the cars — "three, four, five, six, seven" — as they ran.

"Where is the door?" asked Wade, when they reached the cattle car which the brakeman had indicated.

"Lively! lively! The engineer will see you," called the brakeman on the opposite side.

The negro sprang up the ladder, and crept along on the top of the car, Wade following him without question. There was a sliding door which the negro slipped back.

"In with you!" he said in a whisper.

John crept in without even looking where he was going. The negro followed close after, and closed the sliding trap-door behind him. Then there was time to breathe and look around.

It was a curious situation in which Wade found himself. He was lying flat on his belly on a dusty plank eighteen inches wide that ran the full length of the car immediately under the ridge board. This roof, indeed, could not have been more than eighteen inches above the plank on which he lay. His head struck against it when he raised it, and he could not turn his shoulders to roll

over on his back. Below, on each side of the dusty plank, the slight poles of a hay-rack sloped off. They were fully six inches apart, and between them poked the restless horns of the cattle. The man lay close on the board, trembling with fear that he might be punctured.

"Hang on!" called the negro at his feet; and just then the backing train struck them.

The shocks were violent, but both men clung tight; and in a little time the bumping and backing were over, and the train was rolling steadily southward.

"I guess these are poor cattle that they are shipping West to feed," called the negro from Wade's feet. "If there's a full train of them, we're in for a good hundred miles or maybe a hundred and fifty. They were delayed by a wreck up the road last night, and can't be fed till they get to the yards."

Wade ventured to shift his head enough to look over the edge of his plank on to the restless beasts. Cattle were wilder than lions to him. He had at least seen the lions at the Zoo. The hairy, big-eyed creatures seemed peaceful and quiet enough as they stood crowded close up together. Only when one was in danger of losing his footing, through the pushing of others or the swaying of the car, did the wild look come into his eyes and his ugly horns begin tossing. The men lay close over the heads of the cattle,—there was little hay in the racks,—and they could feel the breath of their sighs and gruntings. Worst of all, they must endure the humid, close stench that steamed up from the filth in which they were standing.

Poor, patient, weary beasts, what did they think of this journey? They endured it in their brutelike stolidity. Wade endured it in much the same way. The sun came out hot in the sky and heated the boards of the car-roof

till the stifling sickened him; and he lay on his face half unconscious, like a man in a fever.

Sometimes one of the staggering cattle would lie down, as if trying to get some relief; and then, since this crowded the others, there was danger of their trampling upon him, punching their sharp hoofs through the stretching and groaning hide.

When the cars stopped at the stations, the owners of the cattle would come with sharp bradded poles, and poke the fainting animal till he got up. Sometimes one was loath to arise, and the cursing and exasperated men would beat him and twist his tail on a stick till the torture forced him up.

Wade and the negro kept very still for fear they should be discovered and put off. Steadily the train bore them southward. As the negro had said would be the case, there was little delay at the stations. They were in haste to get the cattle to the yards to let them rest and feed. Sometimes they were side-tracked for a train, a passenger, flying to the city, bearing well-dressed and comfortable people. Wade was ashamed to meet such now. He felt like a worm which, perhaps, has once been a man. The negro spoke to him occasionally, but both were too listless to converse.

It must have been three o'clock when the train slowed up to enter a city. They could not see outside, but they knew from the noise and the bustle that it must be a city of some size. The train came to a stop for a time, and then the cattle cars were backed on a switch and run off into a quieter place.

The negro had been peeping out for some time, waiting for a chance to escape.

"Get away from the train-men and conductor first," he said. "The men at the yards will not care."

The negro slid back the door, and crawled out into the blinding light. Wade followed him, taking with him his precious bundle. It was so delicious to be out in the light and cool air. The train had passed through the city, and they were now in the stock-yards, well on one side.

"Why are you turning that way?" asked the negro, when he noticed the direction Wade was taking. "The town is over this way."

"I'm not going to the town," replied John Wade. "I'm going into the country to look for work."

"What! Are you going to leave the road here?"

"Yes. After this I'm going to foot it or pay."

"Got enough of the road, eh?" And the negro smiled a sickly smile.

"I've got enough of beating my way."

"Well, I'm for the city to get something to eat."

"I don't want anything to eat just now. I first want a bath and a walk."

"Well, good-bye," said the negro, kindly.

"Good-bye," said Wade, giving his hand.

The hands gripped strongly, and held for a moment. Then the two men walked opposite ways. Neither had learned the other's occupations or desires. Neither knew of the other's name. They had been companions but a few hours, and yet each seemed to know the other perfectly. And now they would never meet again.

There was something of the sweetness of parting in John Wade's heart as he turned into the first country road that he came to, and began tramping toward the fresh green of trees.

XXXVI.

THE country that lay out before John Wade was very different from all that he had seen heretofore.

There were low hills here, with occasional ledges of rock cropping out amid the fresh green of spring woods. The landscape was basking lazily in the clear sunlight. The man, as he tramped along the road, filled with the filth of his ride and the sickening hot smell of the cattle, felt that he was defiling the dust that he trod on. After he had walked some two miles, he came to a clear wooded stream; and, creeping under a fence, he made his way into a place of seclusion, and looked about for a good place to bathe. He soon found a place that was all he could ask. The water was clear and bright, and was rippling over a shallow old road. There were clear stones that he could stand on. The sheltering trees shut him in.

He laid down his highly prized parcel, and opened it out before him. How fresh and dainty it looked! Who would have thought it would have kept so immaculate? Then he proceeded to take off the stiffened garments he had on, and stepped into the cool flowing water. How delicious the soft trickling waves! How it cleansed him, and made him anew!

The bath ended, he put on his clean shirt and socks, beating the dust out of his other garments as well as he could. He folded the soiled things away, and arranged the soap, comb, and razor. When the parcel was made up again and he was quite dressed and ready, he climbed out into the open, and set forth once more on the road.

Darkness came upon him before he had found a place to sleep. During the afternoon a kindly, gray-haired woman had given him a substantial meal, and refused the

money he offered in payment; but at the first farm-house where he had asked permission to sleep in the barn the farmer's wife had refused, because she was alone. And at the next house a man to whom he had made the same request had not only refused, but had backed up his refusal with threats of a dog and a shot-gun loaded with buck-shot.

The road brought him at length to a wooded stream, already touched with the darkness and mystery of the night. What if there were robbers there, waiting for him? He had never felt the tremor of fear when alone in the worst districts of Chicago. Now he would start at the sound of a beetle flying past.

The dark stream was crossed, however, and he was climbing the bank on the opposite side. A sound of some one pounding close in front of him made his scared heart leap up in his mouth. Cold chills swept over his body and legs, accompanied by a prickling sensation as of every hair standing erect. The pounding was followed by sounds of voices, the gruff, strong voices of men. Perhaps it was the robbers he had feared. But he did not stop walking straight ahead.

Once he had gained the bank, he came into an open clearing of the wood. A pleasant scene there met his view. He was fairly in the middle of a farm-yard, the road passing between the house and the barn, the wide gates on each side open.

The house was a small, two-story frame, the unpainted boards gray and softened with the weathering of time. The roof sloped down over the chamber windows. There was a little porch out in the front, which looked toward the stream and not to the road. The gable of the house faced the road, and a well was close to the kitchen door. An old man had been fixing the windlass. That

was the hammering Wade had heard. A watering-trough stood by the well. Some men were just leading horses toward the barn, having come from the trough. The horses' noses were still dripping. All was homelike and peaceful and human.

John Wade walked toward the old man, who straightened up from his work and scanned him narrowly.

"Could you let me sleep in your barn?" he asked.

The old man did not at first understand, and said something in such broken English that Wade could not understand him. The old man was plainly a foreigner,—a peasant from Holland or France. He came forward one or two steps, his feet clumping like wooden legs on the stones. Then Wade saw that he had on huge wooden shoes. He had never seen such shoes before in his life. Above the shoes showed a thin, brown, hairy shank. The old man's blue cotton overalls were rolled up as high as his knees.

One of the men came over from the barn and joined them, while they still were trying to explain. It was probably the old man's son.

"Good-evening," he said politely.

"I was asking him if I might sleep in the barn," the timid traveller explained.

The young man spoke to the old one in some language Wade had never heard. They conversed for nearly a minute. Then the old man turned to him and smiled, and waved his hand hospitably. "Come in, come in," he said, motioning toward the door.

Then another person appeared on the scene, the old wife coming for water.

Wade thought of all the giant stories he had ever read, this woman was so huge and so strong. Clump, clump, she marched in her wooden shoes. She must have been

full six feet tall,— the figure and shape of a woman, but boned and muscled like a man, with great log-like wrists and ankles. She wore a blue cotton skirt, cut off short, half-way up to her knees. It was gathered full and bunched at the hips, and was as short in the back as in the front. Bright-colored stockings with stripes emphasized the logginess of the ankles. She spoke in a heavy, slow bass, and seemed to be saying supper was ready. She was heavy with fat as well as with muscle and bone, huge and upright as an oak of five centuries. Her great arms were bare to the elbow; and she wore a plaid kerchief on her head, folded cornerwise and tied under her chin. She hardly noticed Wade. He felt like a school-boy before the superintendent. The two men allowed her to draw up the water and carry it into the house without so much as offering assistance. Two more men had joined the group, and were washing themselves at the trough.

“Do you want to wash?” said the youngest, the one who had come up first and whom the others spoke to as Anselm. He offered a place at the trough and a large bar of yellow-brown soap.

John Wade put down his bundle, and proceeded to dip in with the rest. When they had finished, Anselm pulled a plug out of the trough and let the water shoot out on the stones. Then they followed the two others into the house, and waited their turn at the towel, which was large and of coarse brown cloth. The old woman was stalking about the room, her heavy shoes pounding on the bare planks of the floor. She was laying an extra place for the guest,— a bowl, a knife, and a spoon. As soon as the men combed their hair, they sat down to the table and began eating without waiting for the others to join them. Anselm waited for Wade at the mirror, and then combed

and parted his wet hair most elaborately, stooping to peer into the dim little glass.

Wade had time to look about the room. It was large and comfortable-looking, but had little furniture to speak of,—the white deal table in the centre spread with the evening meal, a lounge, and some pots of flowers in the window behind it, a clock on the shelf over a stove.

“Sit up,” said the old man, offering a chair next to himself. Anselm, too, took his place at the table. There was bread cut in chunks by each place, and butter that they passed on a plate.

“Hold up your dish,” said the old man in his broken English; and he ladled it full to the brim.

The porridge was of potatoes boiled in milk sauce, not at all disagreeable to one hungry; and the bread was sweet, crusty, and firm. John Wade ate his share with the rest.

The men had but little to say as they ate. They were big men, all of them; and two of them were bearded. Anselm alone was clean shaven. They were brothers, they said to the guest, and none of them ever had married. “One of us is thinking of it, though,” said the oldest one, whose name was Piet. He winked, and seemed to think it a great joke. “And which one do you think it is?” he said slyly.

Anselm colored up red as fire, even under his wet, smooth-parted hair; but he was good-natured, and tried to laugh it off.

They spoke in English, all three, and sometimes replied in English to their father, who addressed them always in his own tongue. They spoke English as if they were native Americans. “We came over when I was a shaver,” said Anselm.

“France?” asked John Wade.

"Belgium," said the oldest of the brothers. He seemed to be more genial now, and glad that a stranger had come.

The old woman did not speak any English; but she seemed to understand what they wanted, and showed a grim appreciation of their jokes.

Still, they had but little to say; and the supper passed chiefly in silence.

When they had finished, they pushed back noisily; and the men began looking for their pipes.

"Do you smoke?" asked Piet, offering his pipe.

"I have a pipe outside," said John Wade. "I stuck it into my bundle."

"I brought the bundle in," said Anselm. "Here it is," taking it from the shelf.

They filled their pipes from the common tobacco box which was placed on the table, and Piet brought matches from the shelf.

"What is your name?" asked the old man.

"John Wade."

"His name is Jan; Jan Redingus, 'most the same as yours," said the father, pointing to the quietest of the men. "Piet is the oldest, and Jan is second, and Anselm is the baby." This they took as a joke, and again the great clumsy giant blushed.

The old man had not risen from the table, and his wife was clearing a place before him and wiping the boards with a cloth. When all was ready, Anselm, who had been sitting on the lounge with Wade, got up and brought the lamp from the shelf and set it in front of his father, who was leisurely taking out his spectacles and wiping them on the ball of his thumb. Then Anselm brought a book from the next room, a book worn with use, but in firm, heavy binding. The men went on filling their pipes, and their mother was clearing the table.

Suddenly the old man began to read very fast and loud, like a priest. He seemed to be reading a lesson of exhortation, and went on for as much as five minutes. The family did not stop and make a business of listening, yet all of them seemed to hear.

When the lesson was finished, the old man turned to the back part of the book, and began reading as if from a prayer. Then he paused, the rest gave the responses, some of them being long and difficult; but no one made a mistake, and they kept together as one voice. Still, they did not make a business of praying. Clump, clump, went the heavy shoes of the giantess to and from the table and cupboard. Piet was putting on his slippers, and Jan was mending his pipe. Anselm, alone of the three, stretched his huge limbs out on a chair, and gave himself to smoking and listening, leading all of the rest in responses.

It was a simple, impressive service, spoken in the unknown language. Wade had not thought so seriously of God and of heaven since he was a youth of some twenty years.

There was none of the feeling of a strain removed when the old man had finished his reading and the book was carried away. All had been as natural as eating or any other duty of the day. Anselm brought his father's pipe, the mother sat down with her knitting,—it was an enormous woollen stocking,—and the men showed disposition to talk.

They were interested in their guest, and in the city, the place they had heard so much about, that seemed to them the centre of the world. How did men do there? Was there great suffering among the poor? Did the rich dine off of gold plates? Was there a great deal of wickedness and crime?

Never had John Wade thought himself eloquent before,

but to-night he was all on fire with his eagerness to be entertaining to his hosts. Most naturally, as among simple folk, they asked him of his own life; and, this being the thread of his story, he told them of city ways and all a man sees and experiences there.

They were as eager in listening as he in the telling. The younger men leaned forward, and even forgot to draw on their pipes. Sometimes they joked one another about their own ignorance and simplicity. It was always Piet and Jan who joked Anselm, for he had ambitions to try the city for himself.

The old people wearied first, and went off to bed up the stairs. They left their wooden shoes at the door. It was easier doing the steps in their stocking feet.

At length the conversation came to a pause. The four men were meditating drowsily, each with his own different personal thoughts.

"Perhaps John is tired," said Anselm. "It is hard work walking the roads."

John Wade warmed up with gratitude, it was so dear to him to be called John.

"And it is hard work for you on the farm," he replied. "Now, if you will show me the way to the barn" —

"Oh, you don't need to sleep in the barn," said Piet. "There is plenty of room in the house. Anselm will make up your bed."

In fact, Anselm was already bringing out linen and pillows and preparing to make a bed on the lounge. His hands were big and clumsy, yet there was hospitality in all the care he took that the mattress should be very well shaken and the coarse sheets should be laid without creasing.

"Give him one of my night-shirts," said Jan, "because I am the nearest his size."

They said good-night when all was ready, and heavily climbed up the stairs.

John Wade soon put out the light, and lay stretched in the sweet-smelling linen. A roof over his head, a soft bed, and a breakfast in the morning,—all these are animal comforts, and it may be they should be despised. Perhaps the knowledge of the presence of simple, loyal, and true-strength comrades under the roof is also an animal comfort. We are still a gregarious species. John Wade was but one of a type.

XXXVII.

THE next morning he did not waken till the woman came in to lay the table for breakfast. He felt a little embarrassed at being thus caught, and feigned sleep until she went into the kitchen. He had only begun slipping into his clothes, however, when she came back, and resumed setting the table. She said something that was probably good-morning, and seemed in no way abashed, but went steadily on with the work, and gave him no further attention. He dressed himself hastily, and folded up the sheets of his bed, spreading the cover back on the lounge. Then he went outside into the dewy, fresh morning, and saw that the sun was just up. The old man was feeding the chickens. The sons were busy at the barn with pigs and horses and cows. Another day had begun. Once more the routine was entered. How Wade envied all people that had a routine that gave them a chance to work! There was nothing for him to do but to go on looking and asking, to beg in a land of strangers for a chance to earn his bread. His bones ached still, and his muscles were stiff and sore. He felt feverish and parched about the lips and in the palms of his hands.

The men came in soon to breakfast, working up to the very minute they were called. After washing there was a short service at the table very similar to that of the night before, only this was before eating, each one sitting in his place at the table.

Breakfast was a business affair, and no reference was made to the conversation of the evening before. There were a few brief explanations about the work of the day; but otherwise they ate in silence, not hurrying or greedy especially, but swiftly, as if they were doing a piece of

work. They had fried pork and eggs for breakfast, with bread and butter, stewed fruit, and coffee.

As soon as one had finished, he got up, took his hat, and went to the barn. Piet was last, and said a few words to his father, then walked to the well with John Wade.

"Me and the boys have been talking it over," he said sheepishly; "and father agrees with us. You had better stop a few days here. You haven't got any place especial to go, and are fagged out with being on the road. It won't cost you anything to stop. Make yourself at home. You can find some books on the shelf. We'll see you again at dinner." And, with this enormous speech ended, Piet hurried away to the barn.

The old man then came out, and with more time, though with no more genuine hospitality than his son had shown, began to talk, and make the stranger feel at home.

"We are going to do a little washing," he said. "If you have some things to be washed, you may as well put them in."

The traveller was lonely and tired. The haven was very tempting. What would a day's board cost these people? Was it not even a kindness to let them give help to a stranger? He decided to stay, as they had asked, only he insisted that he should help with the washing. "I have done my own washing always, Mr. Redingus; and I am handy at it as a woman."

The old man chuckled and agreed. "Anselm is a good hand at the wash-tub, too," he said; "but now they are busy with the spring work. The old woman will be glad of your help, for she is not now what she once was for washing."

So it was settled. Mrs. Redingus looked a little askance at the stranger at first; but once he had thrown off

his coat and vest and rolled up his sleeves, showing his strong white arms, once she had got a good look at his genial, smiling face, and comprehended the sturdy set of his head, she forgot all about the fact that he had been a tramp. He was a genuine workingman now, and as such won her motherly heart.

His first movements, too, showed that he knew about washing; and she turned the whole thing over to him, even sitting down by the well to peel potatoes for dinner and allowing him to go about her kitchen as he liked, making fires and boiling clothes as he chose.

Jan came in for a jug of water, and at a glance saw how matters were: John Wade, bare-armed and steaming, his honest face red and moist with the work, his soft hair falling down on his forehead; then the big, stern mother sitting in the rush-bottomed chair, peeling potatoes, occasionally looking at him approvingly, and pretending a masculine indifference; then the old man hovering about nervously, openly delighted with what he called the new hired girl.

"John's got the old folks hard," he said on returning to his brothers. "I guess they'll not let him go till after Sunday. He's sweating at the wash-tub like a butcher."

"Doing the washing, is he?" said Piet, as he rested the jug on his arm.

"Doing it? He walks about the kitchen like a lord, and the old woman a-likin' it, mind ye."

There was a friendly gleam in Anselm's eyes. Then the three returned to their horses.

The washing was done two hours before dinner, and the clothes were hung out on the line, John Wade doing all this as a matter of course, merely asking for the basket and the clothes-pins. Mrs. Redingus sometimes spoke a few words of English, but never went into sentences.

"What else can I do?" asked Wade, coming back.

She brought out a book for him from the sitting-room, and some seed-cakes from the cupboard.

"No, John," she said, pointing to a bench under the trees; and her hand touched his arm in offering the cakes. Her hand was work-hardened and coarse, yet not without the lingering of a mother's.

He put on his vest, took his coat, and went off to the shade as he was bidden. He was tired and weak, and he saw the woman would be pleased if he did so. The book was a cheap paper novel, but he found it of interest when his thoughts failed. Most of the time he was looking at the house, trees, and sky, and familiarizing himself with the surroundings. "But, if I do that, it will be all the harder to walk away to-morrow," he said. Already it seemed to him that to-morrow was quite impossible.

Dinner over, he went out into the kitchen, and began preparations for washing the dishes. "I am used to all such work," he said naturally. "I've done it ever since my wife died."

Mrs. Redingus let him have his way rather than argue in English. "He gets mother every time," whispered Piet. "She'd never allow it if he could understand her Dutch."

The old woman helped with the dishes, and paid no attention to the boys with their chaff.

Once when she saw a bruise on John Wade's temple, close up under his hair, she brought out some salve, and rubbed it on with her own hand. Then she saw that her sons were laughing at her for soft-heartedness, and solemnly winked at Wade. "Jealous," she said with dry humour, and continued to ignore their presence.

That night, when they were preparing for bed, Anselm did not bring out the sheets to make up the lounge, as he

had done before. "You might as well sleep with me," he said carelessly. "It is easier than making an extra bed." So it came that the four men went heavily up the stairs, and it was as if they were four brothers instead of three and a stranger.

While they were drowsily undressing themselves, when they had stretched their work-wearied, healthy frames at their length in the wide, roomy, high-posted beds, while they were mumbling sleepy talk and then settling into deep-breathing sleep, John Wade was feeling the growth of a wondrous sweet peace with the world. He could not sleep with the rest: he could only lie still and rejoice. Once more the world had come to him, once more it was blessed to live.

The two beds of the roomy chamber were standing on each side of a double window, the heads being placed to the wall. There were lower windows on the sides of the house, and through them the night wind rustled softly.

But the comfort that came to John Wade was from the sleeping men at his side. There they lay in unconsciousness, and he was one of their number. Piet and Jan were in the bed not far away; and beside him, but on the other side, not leaving him on the edge, the giant youth Anselm was lying. His regular breathing moved the bed, his arm touched John Wade's arm as it regularly pushed out with his breath. And this giant was longing for the strangeness and variety of the city; and he was also in love with some girl, perhaps dreaming of her now.

John Wade thought of the morrow, and wondered if he must go on his way. It seemed that he could not do that. He would ask them to let him work for his board.

But, then, there was baby Joe! He must earn money to support little Joe. He thought of all the things that might possibly befall. Suppose he could earn a little

money, and go for Joe and bring him out here. There were schools here ; and Joe could learn to be a farmer, like one of the healthy men by his side. He, too, might grow old here perhaps, always dreaming of Genevieve Radcliffe. Would she grow old, too, and would she marry Mr. Neville? But he could not let himself think of that. He gathered his thoughts in control, and returned to the present again.

Four strong, healthy men breathing together under one roof, and three of them were brothers in flesh, and one of them was a stranger perhaps. No, not one of them was a stranger. They were four brothers sleeping side by side.

XXXVIII.

THE next day was Saturday. "You will stay over Sunday," they all said to Wade; and he agreed without pretending reluctance. He wanted to say that they were very good to him, but the words seemed so awkward he was silent.

"You must let me work for my board," was what he did say; and they only laughed gruffly, as if he were a child talking man-talk.

"He might help father in the garden," said Anselm. "I am not going into the field this forenoon."

"Goin' to town in the afternoon, ain't you?" asked Piet.

Anselm nodded in reply.

"I guess I'll go, too," said Jan. "There's a game on. Do you like base-ball, John? Anselm's a great man at first base."

"Come on and see the game."

But John preferred staying at home.

"He has seen big games in the city; and what does he care for our scrub?" explained Anselm. "But I will work with him in the garden, and show him how to spade up the beds."

"I know how to spade beds already," said Wade; and then the older brothers began chaffing Anselm, and asking John to show him a few tricks about farming.

The day went off pleasantly enough, hot sun and hard labour to steady the mind and keep the memory in abeyance.

And that night they were four brothers again.

The next day was Sunday, sweet and still. There was the quiet commotion of bathing, shaving, and clean clothes in the morning, and then a longer service at

breakfast. John and Anselm washed up the dishes. The mother was not feeling very well. Then the men sauntered out under the trees for quiet talk and Sunday sleeping, to enjoy the wonders of rest after six days of healthy fatigue.

Before dinner Anselm took John out over the farm. He showed him the barn and the horses, the pigs in the pen, the cattle in the pasture, and the fields where they were ploughing for corn.

"How did you like it?" asked Piet, when they had come in for Sunday dinner.

"I wish I could stay always," said John, simply. "If I could only be of enough use for my board."

"Well, we'll talk it over after dinner," said Piet. "Of course, you can do enough for your board."

So the men went out and stood by the well after dinner, while John was working in the kitchen. They called the mother out later; and he felt like a man on trial for his life,—a man whose friends all look at him aloof.

Then they called him later on, and his arms were still bare with the work.

It was Piet who acted as spokesman.

"We all want you to stay, John," he said simply. "But we want you to do what you think is best for yourself. We are poor people, and can't pay you wages that are fair. It would be foolish for us to hire when we're three able-bodied men on the farm, too many, in fact, already. Still, you are handy about the house; and mother is getting old. You can make this your home, then, as long as you like; and by fall, when the cattle are fat, we can pay you money enough or get you a pass on a cattle car to Chicago, and you can bring your baby back, and both live here as long as you like."

This was a long speech for Piet, perhaps the longest he ever had made since a silly young American girl had refused to marry him because he was a Dutchman.

The rest of the family murmured their approval of all Piet had said, and so it was quietly settled.

Then each one went off by himself to finish the day as he chose. The old people slept in their chairs, the man settling down in the kitchen, and the wife rigid and in state in the parlour. Jan took a book, and went off to the barn. Piet went to sleep under the trees. Anselm, after an hour at dressing and brushing his clothes and his hair, hitched in the horse to a new buggy, and drove off, looking very sheepish and very red and moist from the scrubbing and the worry of trying to appear just right. His Sunday clothes were awkward and stiff; and John Wade won his undying admiration by making a natty knot in his scarf, and telling him he looked like a heart-breaker.

Then Wade went off by himself to the banks of the stream in the wood, though still not out of call from the house. He was yet fearful of the silence of the country. He lay down at the foot of a great oak-tree, and allowed his thoughts to wander at will. The blue of the sky was overhead, laced with the fresh green of leaves and the outlines of black, rugged stems. Birds were singing softly now and then, but he was so utterly alone. Yes, now that it was settled that he was to stay in the place, now that his brotherhood was established with these men, and the wildness and fear of wandering had given way to the security of this family, he found that he must still live alone, that his love had come back fifty-fold.

Dreams of Genevieve Radcliffe till all his blood was on fire and the tears were wet in his eyes, dreams of the fair girl with the wealth of smooth black hair and the

sweet, white, dignified face, the steady light of her eyes, the clean-cut sense of her words, the frank impulsiveness of her hand when she said good-bye or good-morning,—they all came back to him now, and fled away again before he could fix them in his memory.

At length he went back to the barn, and found Jan; and together they talked of the book.

In the evening they would be together in the house, and at night four brothers again.

XXXIX.

ON the Sunday afternoon that Genevieve Radcliffe was going back from Goose Island, after she had listened to the declaration of John Wade, she had little but pain and wonder in her heart,—the pain that she had wounded him near to death, and a vague background of wonder that had not as yet been analyzed, but that would grow into arrangement as she should think and reckon with herself. Perhaps there was joy in the wonder, for what woman does not thrill at a confession of love as it bursts from a strong man's control in spite of his resistance? But she did not allow herself at the time to experience any joy. It was only his pain that she could think of, the great sturdy oak trunk strained and tearing with the tempest. Ah, the pity that was in her, as she remembered! But what had kept her from going over to him? Why had she sat helpless in her place? Was not this her friend who was suffering, and had he not stood by her in her trouble?

She was as dazed and uncertain of herself as ever on reaching her home and making ready for tea. They were having a little company that evening, some kindly, Sunday-like, well-meaning people; but she could hardly be civil to them, they seemed so gossipy and frivolous. One old lady saw that she was troubled; and, thinking to be helpful and comforting, she began talking of Mr. Neville, who had sailed a week or two before for Europe, it was understood, on a commission for the *Dilettante*. She had been carefully watching the papers, she said. The returning steamers reported good weather on the Atlantic. There could really be no cause for worry. It was sad that Mr. Neville should be called away by business, but that was one of the disadvantages of marrying a genius, a man who belonged to art.

But Genevieve's mind was on things very different from what the lady was saying. Her thoughts were with the grave man by a window, the man who talked as if life for him had been finished, although the firm, strong face showed that he was but little more than in his thirtieth year. By degrees, however, it came upon her that Miss Ney was talking about music and musicians, and associatively of Hester Carr. She was speaking of a recital Hester had given, and the very favourable treatment she had received at the hands of the critics. One of the Sunday papers, she believed, had printed Hester's picture the week before the recital, with an extended sketch of her unusual career; and the result had been so stimulating that Hester had seen the materialization in a single evening of her cherished dream of foreign study, and had taken the first steamer she could get for Germany.

"Wasn't that the reason of her very sudden start?"

Genevieve gave some indifferent answer.

"How romantic of her, going off to Berlin to study, and in such a strange way, and with so little money," Miss Ney continued. "Have you heard from her, Miss Genevieve? I believe you knew her quite well? You were forced to, I suppose, living in the same house, though why she should live in a settlement I could never see. I have heard her say that she cared nothing for charity. I suppose Mrs. Purcell kept her there for fear she might get into worse places. Mrs. Purcell is such a dear kind woman, but so odd! Have you heard what steamer Miss Carr took? Wouldn't it have been strange if she had taken passage on the 'Bohemia'? She and Mr. Neville knew something of each other, did they not?"

The thought that was in Miss Ney's mind could not escape even Genevieve's listless attention. Something in the speaker's manner told her that she was only voicing

a rumour which must have been more or less discussed. The possibility that had been so plainly in Miss Ney's mind sent the hot blood to Genevieve's face ; and yet she knew — and marvelled at the knowledge — that the shock she felt was as impersonal as if the two people whose names had been thus obviously connected had been strangers to her. It was only the wound and the shrinking every good woman feels at being brought suddenly face to face into the evil she has known of only in the abstract.

Almost at once her thoughts went back to the man at the window. Was he standing there now ?

"I should be very glad to hear that Hester had secured a passage on the ' Bohemia,' " she said listlessly. "I ought to have spoken to Maynard, and asked him to look her up. He and Hester were on very good terms. But I don't think Hester had settled her plans until after Maynard left. At least, she said nothing to me about them."

"Oh, of course, it is just senseless gossip," said Miss Ney, pleasantly. "Miss Carr is so unconventional, that people misunderstand her, I suppose."

"Yes, Hester is a queer girl," assented Genevieve, still without feeling. "Some people are bound to misunderstand her ; but you have known so many artists, Miss Ney, that you know exactly how to take them."

The long evening dragged itself out somehow. One phrase, "I mean that I love you," kept echoing in Genevieve's ears long after she had gone up to her room ; and then she lay down on a couch, and thought of how the man looked who had said this. What did it mean, this wild whirl and tumult within her ? Why was she not pitying the man ? Why was she not suffering remorse for her impulsiveness ? And why was she not more deeply moved by the horrible thing that Miss Ney had been

hinting to her? Because she did not believe it? No. She did not believe it, it is true; but she knew that the real reason why it left her cold was because a knowledge that it was true would have given her no deep personal wound. She saw in a flash how superficial had been the love between Maynard Neville and herself, how weak had been the bond which could snap with so little shock.

Her thoughts turned again to the workingman, to his loneliness and suffering. How terrible his passion had been! "Love is so different in different natures," she said thoughtfully. "I have never known it like this; and yet how could women wish it otherwise, so deep and yet gentle and tender?"

"Yes, love is very different," she went on, after long moments of reverie. "Now, Maynard, I think, loved me with his whole heart; and he was never like that." For a flash she recalled just how he had been,—the frank, blond, handsome face, all eager and confident and loving. "Maynard's love was the love of a youth," she said, half smiling; "but this is the holiness of passion."

Then she lay picturing it again, and for long hours she was not weary of the dreaming.

The striking of a clock finally roused her to the lateness of the hour. She rose, and made ready for bed with a dimness and stupor in her eyes. Then, when all was ready, when she had turned out the light and was just creeping into the white linen, suddenly her whole mood changed; and, falling on her knees by the bed, she stretched out her quivering arms over it, and, hiding her face in the coverlid, burst into a torrent of tears, sobbing and moaning like a child.

XL.

WE are all children in our nature, and only play at being grown-ups because we have inherited the game from our ancestors. Genevieve went about her work the next morning in precisely the usual fashion. She wondered at herself at times for doing so. But, when she stopped to think of it, there was nothing else she could do. We are such weak creatures of habit.

There was the work in the training school through the day, at evening the settlement talk, and later the clubs and the parties and the whirl of a house full of strangers. The days went on for some time in this way. She instinctively avoided John Wade. Then her mother fell ill, and while with her she heard from Sadie that Wade had gone away from Chicago.

Then came his simple, plain letter. "It is for the best, it is for the best," she kept saying again and again to herself. But she felt as if some one were dead, some one who was the reason of her living.

Her mother recovered from the illness, and Genevieve went back to her work. For the first time work would not satisfy. She was longing and growing nervous for vacation.

There came letters from Maynard Neville in due time, aimless, characterless letters, which she read with an aimless attention. He spoke of the great amount of work he found to do, though he did not say what it was. He implied that it was in the cathedrals of North France, but his letters were posted at Paris.

She sat down with a listless sense of duty, after receiving one of these, and wrote a long letter, in which she told him of the change which had come about in her feelings, and made it plain to her that they ought not to think of

marriage. She did not even hint at the rumour which had connected his name with Hester Carr's, because she did not in the least believe it. She had been influenced by it only so far as this: that the knowledge that she could hear the rumour without any deep sense of personal loss had shown her how small a place Maynard Neville had occupied in her life.

And yet, although she did not believe the rumour, it was quite like a woman that, after writing to Neville and releasing him, Genevieve should write to Hester Carr and tell her what she had done. She did not allow any personal feeling to creep into the letter, but wrote as formally as one girl writes to another to tell her of the breaking of an engagement, and without anything of confidence or intimacy.

The letters that came in reply brought with them but slight satisfaction. Maynard's was a tirade against feminine fickleness in general, and Genevieve in particular, with much of self-pity and commiseration, and too much anger to permit its author to plead. Genevieve wrote to him kindly, but she did not renew the broken vows.

Then came a scrawling, nervous letter from Hester Carr. It was gay and reckless to frivolity, though it spoke only of serious things. She congratulated Genevieve on the breaking of her engagement, but offered no word of sympathy or comfort, which was characteristic. Then, in the very end of the letter, she told Genevieve, in the most matter-of-fact way, that she had just promised to marry a Captain Bennett of the army, an old Colorado acquaintance whom she had found on board the steamer on which she crossed. She gave Genevieve no hint as to whether the engagement would mean a change in her plans for study in Germany, but merely signed herself briefly and with a flourish, without terms of affection or friendship, "Hester Carr."

Genevieve showed the letter to Bettine, and they discussed it together. But the letter that she thought of the most, the one that she never spoke to Bettine about, was a short, lead-pencilled scrawl on a piece of cheap blue-lined paper. She knew every word of it by heart, even the thumb-print that was black on the corner and the broken folds in the cheap paper. It was as follows:—

“Miss Sadie Willetts:

“Dear Friend,—I am working here on a farm, and want you to tell me about Joe. Is he well, and do you talk to him about me so as to make him remember? I enclose four dollars, and will send more as soon as I can get it. They don’t pay me much money here; but there isn’t any work here for a city man. There are too many men now in the country. I have a good home; but the country is horrible. It’s so still and dark in the night-time. It will make a good home for Joe; and I shall come and get him in the fall, and bring him out here to be a farmer. He can go back to the city if he likes when he grows up. Give him my love, and give my regards to Mrs. Belden and Miss Radcliffe.

“I will send you more money when I can.

“Yours truly,

“JOHN WADE.”

Genevieve kept the letter a day after reading it, and later on borrowed it again.

XLI.

THE day of vacation came, and again the Canadian summer. Genevieve entered once more the atmosphere of sound from Niagara, and rode and drove as before, and rested and looked at the farm stock. Uncle George was as courtly as ever. The beech-trees were still black with shade. The green pasture smiled level under the sun.

Yet it was all changed to the girl. She was a woman now, and this was her past. She must go out to work in the world. This estate did not longer pertain to her. There were other things that had entered her life. She would not define them for the summer; but, when she had stayed a few months in the past, she would go into the future again. And she knew she should never return.

Notwithstanding this conviction, the play of her part was kept up. She looked at the improvements on the estate as if they were improvements for her. She talked business with Uncle George, and together they laid plans for the next year, only at times she broke into her natural self, and suggested some wild plan that shocked him.

"Why do you give it all to me?" she said to him once, impulsively. "Why don't you give it to Robert? He is naturally the heir. A woman has no business with property."

"My dear, my dear, my dear!" said Uncle George softly and reprovingly; and all that afternoon, when they were talking, he kept interpolating the phrase of "my dear."

"But this life is not for me," she again said to him some days later on. "I am a working-woman now. Don't you know that this very next year I am to be teaching and drawing a salary?"

"You can give all that to your charities," he said vaguely. "I should not like to think that you were living on the money that you earned yourself."

"But I am all so different, uncle. The only money that I can spend with a clear conscience is that which I earn myself. What right have I to spend any other? I have done nothing to produce it."

"If everybody believed as you do, Genevieve, the world would go back to barbarism. Why, what would civilisation signify? You might as well say all progress was in vain."

"If I were only sure that our specialised civilisation were progress. It seems to me now only one-sided idleness and pleasure with the rich, and drudgery and suffering with the poor."

"If you are going to deny civilisation, my dear, what is there that you will not deny?"

Her words came quick and warm. "Strength and courage and cheeriness, friendship and love," she said.

But the old man was getting querulous. He had never been so vexed with his niece.

"A common workman may have all these qualities, and yet not know how to read his letters."

"I should like to teach them to him," she said softly.

"Take care, Genevieve: you are treading on dangerous ground. You will be talking wild anarchy next. This is what you learn by living with those long-haired cranks who call themselves benefactors of society."

"Do you happen to know any of my friends, that you speak of them that way?" were the words that were on her lips. She checked herself in time, however. It was her uncle, and he did not understand.

"You are quite mistaken, uncle. I have talked with very few cranks." It seemed so sickening to her that

he, the elder and the man, should leave to one side all the argument, and take to personality and reviling.

"Well, you'll get older some day. I suppose all girls have their silly age." And Uncle George abruptly changed the subject.

All the time through those weeks she was thinking of John Wade. She had thought of him much for the year and a half since she knew him, but now the feeling was daily more personal. She thought of him when she was sad, and of coming to him for consolation. She often pictured his face and the expression of tenderness as he talked to her. She came to him in trouble as well, and his work-tried strength was her bulwark. Then, again, she would tell him of her childhood and all the dreams she dreamed; for he stood, the firm centre of her universe, as real and as intimate as her own consciousness,—a strong, pure-minded man who loved her and helped her and protected her, who was absolute though all else was shifting.

Of all his little weaknesses and foibles none was more cognisant than she. She knew that he was ignorant and unenterprising, that he was filled with the prejudices of his class. He would not reason beyond a certain point. He was intellectually lazy, she said, and liked basking and enjoying better than mental effort. He was not ambitious, and, had he been born a gentleman, would not have been of the same strength and nature. It was his work that had made him,—his work that he accepted as the inevitable, and loved and was true to because it was the inevitable. "A man is put here, and has only to go on the best he can," he had often said; and in going on, in filling his place as he did, this was his animal greatness, like an ox that retreads the ploughed field nor questions its yoke or its driver.

To her, who had so long been aimless and doubting, there was a joy that he never could feel, though its results showed everywhere in his constitution. She stood for the first time on the borders of the land promised by heaven. For the first time it was shown to her that the promised land is a field for labour. To stand in, and do one's share; to do it freely and easily, if possible, but in any event to do it; to bear slavery and hunger, if one must,—if other workers have become masters and are selfish,—but, at all events, to do one's part, to justify one's place in the world.

She saw that there were many things besides work, things that were primal and lasting,—beauty and childhood and song; memory and calm meditation for the youth, the longing for the beyond for the maiden. The child, the mother, the cripple, the strong giant,—for all of them there was the supreme gift of love; and this word Genevieve kept repeating while she thought of John Wade.

According to the yearly custom her father and the family came up to spend the last six weeks of summer. They all saw that Genevieve was more serious than usual, more given to thought; but it was on account of the broken engagement, they said, and that was a matter which time would remedy. What they regretted most was that her sorrow was making her radical, that she was getting ideas about principles and society. The father was most concerned and confused about this, for his daughter insisted on doing the things that he preached from the pulpit. This was a constant source of annoyance to him. His sermons had never been taken so literally before, and he resolved to be more conservative in the future.

One day, when the family was at breakfast, the question

of democracy was up; and Genevieve gave her opinions. Mrs. Davis had offered a remark that excited her; and she had broken out with something more than enthusiasm about the social equality of the classes, and the statement that refinement was not a class quality, but existed as much in one class as another.

Her mother spoke up very slowly and with extreme guarded formality. "Your fine theories all fall to the ground with one simple question, Genevieve." Then, when all were listening and when the lesson would be severely remembered, she continued, "Would you be willing to marry a labourer?" The respectable and genteel company thought that the rebuke was well deserved, though they looked at their plates and kept their faces blank of expression.

The girl rose from the table, and her face was like a red rose. But her voice was tremulous and pitying, all of her indignation having departed.

"I had never thought of marrying a labourer, mamma," she said, as if timid of hurting their feelings. "I had never thought of it before; but, now that you ask me the question, I shall not cease to pray God that one day I may be worthy of the honour."

The guests rose from the table. They had listened already too long over the discussion. Each began to talk of the trivial amusements of the day, and each tried to overlook the disturbing incident. But they only pretended to forget; for, as soon as they had separated into groups and had grown confidential, they all began talking about it, and pitying poor Mrs. Radcliffe.

XLII.

SO the dreams were suddenly changed, and what had been a friend was a husband. Dear and vivid dreams now, and not to be set upon paper.

There were many checks and falterings, many qualms of fear and of shame. To become a workingman's wife, to grow intimate with what she had always looked upon as coarseness,—it seemed impossible to her; but, when she thought of the man himself, all things were comfortably possible. She watched working people now with a strange and frightened fascination. Often she would cross the river into the city of Niagara Falls, and look at the men in the factory district. "I am to become one of these people," she would say to herself; and it required a strong will to walk fearlessly among them. The filth of their work, the smell of their grease and tobacco, sometimes the coarseness of their language that was but half modified in deference to the lady,— "These are brothers," she would say: "these men are John Wade's friends and companions."

Only when she looked at the idle, aimless people who had always been her associates did the feeling that she loved these others come to her. At least, they had made idleness impossible,—these strong, hearty toilers she was to know.

She thought of how they should live,—she and her husband, John Wade; of their house in the workingmen's quarter, and of the friends who would be welcome to come to it. First among them was the police officer, Mr. Nugent,—he and his wife and the children. Then gradually the circle would grow, other men and women would come, such as they two liked; and toward all of them she would extend her best. She would share with them her

culture and education, and still others would come to them. When she should be a working-woman, all of the influence she had longed for in such silly fashion two years ago would come to her naturally in this true relation of neighbours.

Was it her love for this man that overflowed till it surrounded all his friends and associates? Or was it first the love of his class that had brought her to acknowledge this man? She had learned to love only the life of a worker and to look on all other lives with pity. Was this from her love for John Wade, or had her love for him grown up because of her devotion to a principle? The growth had been complex and difficult. It was useless to speculate on causes.

She saw that such a marriage as this would mean a complete rupture with her property. Not only would she not inherit the estate, but even her allowance would be cut off, if only with the kindly intent of forcing her into return and submission. She was glad that this would be so. All that she wanted, she said, was an even footing with other workers, she with her salary as teacher and her husband with the wages of his labour.

She thought much of the social break with her family, and this was more serious than all other changes. They would never acknowledge such a marriage. It would be impossible for them to do so. She would return alone to visit them, but could never bring her husband with her. Nor could they come to see her in her home. His presence would never become endurable. Moreover, the dignity of the man would make their coming impossible, though they would not acknowledge the reason. They would grieve and complain that she had forsaken them, though she remained here in the same city. She smiled as she thought that nothing would have been said of

“forsaking” if she had married Maynard Neville and gone to live in Europe with gentlefolk. Her friends, even her friends of the Settlement, would be horrified, and would avoid her. All these things would she endure for the sake of the new life she was to lead,—a life that was still often repugnant to her, when she thought of the workingman’s differences.

But there comes a time in the lives of all souls when they must rise and start off alone. The demand from within must be obeyed. Genevieve Radcliffe’s order had come to her from the sources supreme, and her singleness of purpose was not wanting.

She knew that this act of obedience could not be accomplished in a moment. She knew that it was a lifetime of serving, and that she would not be free as she had been. Even in the very beginning the man’s stubborn will would be a mountain to move and overcome. He would be opposed in every way to her giving herself up to a workingman, and would argue that they must deny even love. But in the end love would conquer triumphant.

So the dream building was completed outdoors in the sound of the waterfall. The dark, slight, sweet-smiling girl was in heart a workingman’s wife. She was very sure of this now. She had scrutinised every detail and possibility. Only when the decision was reached, when she saw that it would be as impossible to turn back as it is for the woman to turn back to girlhood, when even the decision she had made was a part of the irrevocable past, did she sit down and write him a letter, the answer to the love he had declared.

XLIII.

ANSELM came home late one evening. It was Saturday, and he had been in the ball game. Piet and Jan had gone in to supper, but John Wade had stayed out to help unhitch the horses and put them in to the pasture.

"A letter for John," Anselm called out cheerily as he drove up; but he did not offer to give it to him till they were walking in to supper.

John Wade took it, and glanced at the envelope carelessly, and slipped it into his pocket.

"Where is the soap?" he asked, looking for it. They were making ready to wash at the trough.

"Isn't the letter about your kid?" asked Anselm, kindly, when the water was running.

"No. It's from a lady in Canada, a lady that I used to know."

Anselm was thinking of the ball game. He had made some good plays that afternoon.

The letter was from Genevieve,—the firm, even writing of his name and the town where they received their mail. All through supper he was thinking of that writing, and speculating on what it could say to him. Sometimes he would put his hand back to his pocket as if to reach for his handkerchief, and softly press his fingers on the paper. It seemed as if it might not be true, as if he had only been dreaming.

After supper he helped to clear off the table while the old man was reading the prayers. Then they all sat for a time with their pipes; and Anselm told them the particulars of the ball game, modestly boasting of his victories.

There was no chance for reading the letter. The surroundings were not in harmony with it. John Wade took

the crisp square out of his pocket, however, and put it in a little book he was reading at the table. Then he sat looking at the writing that he had thought he had put from him forever.

“Mr. John Wade,
Lyndall, Ill., U. S.”

He had a package of letters like this, only they were much worn and soiled ; but he had left them with Sadie in Chicago, along with the things that were Angeline's.

Still Anselm talked of the game, and his brothers were proud of his triumphs.

“To-morrow I will take the letter out to the pasture,” thought John Wade, “and there I will learn what she is thinking.”

It seemed natural enough that she should write to him now, though before it had not entered his head that she could have anything to say to him after the confession of his baseness. Still, great joy is always natural when it comes. Perhaps it was once always with us.

The three men were sleepy and yawning. John Wade pretended to yawn also. Then they tramped up the stairs, and stretched themselves gratefully on the beds in the cover of the whispering darkness. The room was cool and airy, the window-sashes being taken from the frames. September nights are warm in the country, in spite of the moist breath of the trees. The three brothers talked for a time, but soon were breathing steadily. John Wade was wakeful to-night. His hands held a letter under his pillow, and the thrills from it sang to his heart.

XLIV.

SUNDAY morning in the late country summer, with the rest and the peace of the farm.

John Wade had come out to the pasture, a favourite place Sunday morning when he wanted to live in the past. The cattle were friends to him now, and took away the loneliness of the country. There was one young sorrel mare who would come up and sniff at him curiously, then whirl and gallop away if he offered to get up and pet her. She would return, however; for she knew he would offer her apples. She was most beautiful when whirling and galloping; and she knew this, and did it often to please him.

John Wade understood this action, and did not blame her for feminine vanity.

There was the level green of the pasture, the banks that sloped down to the brook, and the fringe of dark trees on the border. To-day there was Genevieve's letter; and, when he had waited for a time to be in the proper mood, he opened it, and spread it out on his knee.

"You told me of your love," it began; "but you did not ask for an answer. The answer was your right to ask, but you did not suggest I might give it. That was as well, perhaps; for I was a weak and foolish girl. Besides, I was engaged to marry Maynard Neville then; but now I am free. The relation is permanently broken, and I stand with my freedom again.

"And now I can make answer to you. I can make it freely, though you have not asked it of me.

"John Wade, as a true wife loves her husband, as she rests on him and looks to him for help, as she shares with him her dearest joy and her sorrow, and in return

receives his own as she is able, even in this way as I have described lives my love for you. I did not know this on that day in which you spoke to me. I have not been conscious of it until now, but a few days ago. Fourteen days in that time marked an epoch for me, and I shall not soon forget it. I knew before this that I loved you with depth and reverence: that I have known from the early days of our acquaintance: but I thought it was the love between friends. I thought you were of a different class, and conjugal love was impossible. You were the first to find the mistake, because you are more natural and direct than I; but with time it has come to me, too, and I am proud to stand and confess it.

“Do I seem bold and unwomanly in your eyes? Does it appear to you immodest and unseemly that I should be saying these things? Believe me, it is of you and your own welfare I am thinking quite as much as my own. Moreover, it is necessary that we understand each other. It is justice that I do my part.

“You told me once that you loved me. I am late in telling you the same. I can only ask your forgiveness for letting you go as I did. It was because I was stupid and vain, because I did not know truth from falsehood.

“You have never asked me to be your wife, and I am not going to tell you in advance what my answer will be. I have heard that, when a man is sure of an answer, he is slow at making his proposal.

“Do I seem to jest on serious, holy subjects? It is because my joy is so great, because I have come to myself, and find that I am as Eve was in Eden. You will allow certain boldnesses on my part, too, because there has been a class prejudice between us; and, whenever such prejudices are broken, it must be done by the one who was supposed to be the superior. You are the man,

and I am the woman; and yet it is more possible and fitting for me to say 'marry me' to you than it is for you to say it to me.

"Notwithstanding all this, I positively assure you of the fact I have not said it at all, and have no intention of doing so. The man who wants me for his bride must seize me in the daring old fashion. Meanwhile, if I wish to take lessons in housekeeping and cooking in order that I might make a snug little home, after my half-day's teaching is done, if I am sometimes thinking of a good man coming home happy from his work, who will praise all the pains I have taken and pretend all the new things are excellent,—if I wish to think of these things I do not know who can prevent me. I don't know whose business it is that I should not be left to think as I please.

"Dear friend, John Wade, I am going to Chicago to-morrow to make ready for my coming year's work. I have not yet selected my place to board, but it shall be somewhere in the neighbourhood of my school. I am engaged for three hours every morning. For this I am to get forty-five dollars a month. It is all the money I shall have, as my fortune and my allowance are surrendered back to my uncle. I shall hope to get something extra for special pupils, though I shall need more training myself. A teacher's life may not be very light; but it is at least independent, and I shall like it. I may confess to you, moreover, as a dear and intimate friend, that I shall hope to marry some strong workingman some day; and, by putting our two earnings together, I think we shall keep house very nicely. Sadie tells me that you are coming back to Chicago for Joe in the fall, some time late in November. She can give you my address, in case you should have interest to see me.

"Most cordially I ask you to come, John. Now I must not write any more for fear that you would be pained at my boldness. Good-bye, and my love,

"Your friend,

"GENEVIEVE RADCLIFFE."

The drowsy day basked in the sun, and the cattle sought the shade and the water. The sorrel mare, too, wandered off to feed. Her whirling and galloping were not appreciated. Occasionally flocks of crows crossed the pasture to the wood. They were having an assembly in the tree-tops, and the air was musical with distant cawing.

John Wade did not move from his place. Was he suddenly mad or was he dreaming?

XLV.

THE Redingus family were in mourning, for their wanderer was going to leave them. It was as if Anselm were going, or that Piet or Jan were to be married. And yet they would not admit that they were mourning. It was not their way to show emotion.

Old Mrs. Redingus had been up the night before a full two hours later than usual, ironing and mending John's shirts and socks, and folding them and tying them in a package. Once her tears fell on the shirt she was folding, and Piet saw them fall; but he did not laugh, as was his custom.

Now they had sat down to breakfast. It was earlier than usual by an hour. Outside was the twilight of the dawn. John's train would start very early. He had a pass with a neighbour who was shipping cattle.

The old man began with morning service in his high, strained, measured voice, while the rest sat about with closed eyes. John had grown very familiar with the form now: he would have noticed if anything was omitted. This morning something was added, something just before the end. The old man's voice was getting husky, and suddenly came to a stop. There was silence for a moment, and then he tried to resume. He could not. Then Piet took up the responses, and together they finished the service.

The wife got up immediately, and hurried out to the kitchen. The old man sat listlessly at his breakfast, and the young men were awkward and silent.

Mrs. Redingus came in soon with red eyes, but bearing a dish triumphantly in her hand. She set it down in front of John. It was filled with preserved and spiced apples, a delicacy of which she knew he was fond.

The ice was broken, and Anselm began talking.

"When you get a chance, look around for a job for me, John. I am tired of grubbing on this farm, where we three keep crowding one another over the boundary every time we try to turn around."

"I may not find a job for myself, and be coming back in the spring, asking you to feed me again."

The old woman looked up, nodding.

"But can you bring your wife, too?" she said.

"I cannot marry, at least till I get steady work."

"Oh, you'll find something steady," said Anselm. "Don't come back to the country: there's no chance. Get a place for me, too, in Chicago."

"Why don't you try renting just for one year?" asked John, though he knew what the answer would be.

"Yes, and be like Bill Purdy. No, sir. A renter never has any chance. He works like a slave all his life to keep even. Lives on salt pork and corn bread, and then is turned out when he's too old, to live on his relatives or at the poorhouse."

"That's so," said Jan.

Piet and the old people nodded, proud of Anselm.

"No, sir. I will go to the city or go West when I strike out. This country is as dead as a nail."

They saw that it was time to be off, and there was great satisfaction in getting ready and being exceedingly busy. The horses must be hitched in, John's bundle stowed in the buggy, the lunch tied up in a box, and the final messages given.

Then the final good-byes.

"Come back and bring your little boy this fall, if you don't find work," said Mr. Redingus.

The woman patted his cheek with her enormous work-calloused hand. "Good-bye, John," was all that she

said ; but the tears were flowing down her cheeks. Wade put his arm around her neck, and pressed his lips to the weather-beaten face. He did it before them all, and they did not despise him for it.

"You have been a mother to me," he said, "and I will come back if ever I'm in trouble."

He turned toward Piet then.

"I'm going to drive over with Anselm," said Piet, gruffly ; and Jan stretched out a strong hand.

"I must stay and shuck at the corn," he said. "Good luck, John."

"The same to you, Jan."

The three men sprang into the buggy, and Anselm whipped up the horses.

"If we don't drive, we'll be late," he said grimly. And the wagon rattled down the bank, and away from the house toward the town.

John remembered all the places as they passed them, and how he had felt that day when he came in, tired and sick and alone.

All the way Anselm kept talking of Chicago, and asking John to write him if times were better.

They were in plenty of time for the train. It had been arranged that John should accompany a neighbour who was going to Chicago with cattle. There was some delay about getting started. They stood around and talked dully for two hours with the neighbour about the price the cattle would probably bring.

"You must make this man work his passage," said Anselm, nodding toward John. "He knows all about a steer now."

"Oh, there's little to do," said the neighbour. "He can go to sleep in the caboose, unless some of the cattle lie down, and it's not at all likely they will."

John Wade saw a tramp watching the train; and he pitied him, and hoped he would get a ride.

Finally, they were off; and it was a hurry to shake hands with Anselm and Piet.

"If you do come to Chicago, write to me, and come and see me first thing. I will look out and give you your board," he shouted.

Then they were trailing away from the station. They could see Anselm and Piet going back to the wagon.

"It's a fine day," said the conductor, in friendly fashion; and all turned their thoughts toward Chicago.

Whenever they made a stop, Wade got out with the neighbour; and they ran along the car to see if the cattle were all right. When it came night, they tried to sleep in the caboose, stretching themselves out on the benches.

Once in the night Wade wanted an extra handkerchief. He had used the one he carried to tie up a brakeman's bruised thumb. In the darkness he was fumbling with his bundle, and his hands touched something small and of wool. He took the lantern to examine. It was a pair of little wool stockings for Joe, with gay red, fancy knit tops and tiny white toe-tips and heels. Old Mrs. Redingus had done them with her own hands, and had kept the secret from all of them.

XLVI.

IT was long after midnight when the train pulled into Chicago and was side-tracked in the stock-yards. At daylight they began unloading the cattle, and by breakfast time Wade was free to go. He said good-bye to the neighbour and sent back messages to his friends. Then he started out alone on the street. He wanted to have quiet for thinking.

How much at home he felt, and how strange it was to feel at home again ! All the freshness and green of the country were behind him, like a dream. The gray, coal-smoked, sodden-smelling city was around him. The hurry of men going to work, the wagons rumbling, the chimneys smoking, — it was his native air. He was treading his native heath. He loved the hideous ugliness of the place and the crowds of patient-faced men. He stopped in a lunch-room for breakfast, and enjoyed the tasteless, insipid food dealt out in impersonal fashion. Then out on the streets again, where the heavy teams were drawing loaded wagons and the street-cars were ringing their gongs. He took one of the cars on Halstead Street, and stood on the front platform to enjoy things. Then he felt that he was going toward Genevieve Radcliffe, and the city faded suddenly from his sight.

What did he mean by this journey ? Why had he not stayed where he was ? He could have paid the neighbour to bring Joe back with him. He need never have come to her here, to hold down and narrow her life. But still the car hurried on. He did not get off and go back, and a great fulness of joy was within him.

He found Sadie, as usual, at Settlement House ; and she ran up to bring little Joe. They would see if the baby would remember.

"Dada, dada," he called out before they were half down the stairs, and kicked and held out his arms.

"He knew you the very first minute," shouted Sadie, dancing awkwardly around them; and the tears were soft in her eyes.

That afternoon he went over to see Genevieve, still wondering if it were possible he was to see her. Their meeting was very much the same as usual, not at all like the meeting of lovers.

"I knew it was wrong to come, but I could not stay away," he said simply.

For some time she did not reply. To look at him was feasting for her eyes.

There was still much of the workingman and the lady as these two sat and talked of their plans for the marriage. He was delicate on all personal points: it was more as if she were to marry some other. And still it was settled from the first, else why should she have written and he come back? After some consultation it was decided that they should not wait for him to get work. Genevieve had a little money of her own. She had sold some diamonds she had owned, together with other small property. Besides, there was her salary,—that was sure; and he would find work in good time. John did not like this at first; but he saw that the first step had been taken, and now it was useless to hesitate.

In the days that followed they spent all their afternoons together, arranging for their home of the future. They bought a snug little house not far away from the school, and there was a back yard for a garden. They made but a small payment down, and arranged for the rest by instalments. Then there was the buying of the furnishings of the house, after John had moved his poor things over. They went to the cheap furniture stores,

and were as serious on saving a half-dollar as if it were a question of hundreds. It was all like play to Genevieve. To John, too, it was very like playing.

One day he went to see Mr. Davidson, his landlord on Goose Island, and former employer.

"Hello, John, glad to see you. Do you want a job? I'm starting up a little bit of business, and was looking for you for a foreman."

So it was that work came itself, and the two were happier than ever.

Then the inevitable moved a step faster.

The work would not begin for a week, and they decided to be married before it. There was great haste in getting things ready, but they liked the hurry and excitement.

Sadie was engaged as their little nursemaid and housekeeper. She was almost as happy as they. She was so jealous of their taking her baby.

Genevieve's family did not come to the wedding. They would not even meet John Wade.

"You have chosen your own path," said her father. "You must not expect us to accompany you on your journey. You are always welcome to come here, only don't bring that labourer when you come, and never speak of him in our presence."

Her old friends avoided her politely. They had pity only for the family. Even Bettine was cold. She could not understand what she called Genevieve's unnaturalness.

Bettine herself was soon to be married to Mr. Westfall, and together they would work with the poor. Bettine was fond of the phrase "with the poor," and corrected those who said "for the poor." By "with," however, she did not mean the intimacy that leads to marriage.

Mrs. Purcell was much troubled, too. "Was the Settlement theory right?" she sometimes asked.

And Genevieve herself and John Wade, were they sure of all that had happened? It could not have been otherwise, they knew; but was it well to have been at all?

XLVII.

THE wedding was lonely enough, and as solemn as if it had been a confirmation. Perhaps a true marriage is more natural so.

There were four guests. Mr. Nugent and his good wife stood by, and Sadie solemnly held baby Joe. Mrs. Purcell had intended to be present, but had sent her flowers at the last moment. There was too much misgiving within her.

The ceremony over, they went from the little church directly to their own house near by. Mr. Nugent and his wife did not accompany them. Even Sadie went ahead with the baby, to make final preparations for supper.

They were walking westward,—these two; and the setting sun was level in their eyes.

The home-coming was simple and cheery. Baby Joe was strutting about the new house, shouting and crowing over his discoveries, and making things merry for them all.

Sadie had the supper ready in the dining-room, and the four sat down quite merrily together. The newness of the dishes and linen, the reminiscences of the places where they had bought them, kept lively conversation a-going, and called up quiet, happy laughter.

Only when the work was put away, when Sadie and Joe had gone off to bed, did the seriousness come upon them. They sat together by the table, each strained with the consciousness of the situation, each trying to be natural and cheerful. The lady was more ladylike than ever. The man was a workingman still.

"Why, you have forgotten your pipe," said Genevieve. "I could not think what was the matter."

She went to the little clock shelf where, with much

former glee, a place had been arranged for the tobacco box, and brought the pipe over to him. She even filled the bowl with the fragrant tobacco, and brought him a match ready lighted ; but he looked in her eyes, and smiled kindly. "I do not feel like smoking to-night," was all he said ; and she did not understand at that moment, and sat down with a feeling of disappointment.

The strain of the strangeness of the situation was surely growing upon her. After all, had she made a mistake ? Had she been, as her father said, unnatural ? Was the workman before her, after all, the man she had really loved ? Suddenly her womanishness was uppermost, and the tears forced themselves from her eyes.

Then the strong man came to his kingdom. Never had prince risen with more stately and dignified motion than this plain, simple workman, John Wade. He walked over to her quite royally, for he loved her with the love of all the world.

"My own little wife," he said proudly, and folded his strong arms around her.

THE END.

